WEST AFRICA: CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION STUDY

Francophone Civil Society Organization Assessment: Mali and Côte d'Ivoire Synthesis Report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AADeC	*Association d'Appui à l'Auto Développement Communautaire*
AAECI	*Association des Amis des Enfants de Côte d'Ivoire*
ACAT	*Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture*
ACHS	African Center for Human Security
ACOD	*Association Conseil pour le Développement*
ACORD	*Association de Coopération et de Recherche pour le Développement*
ADAC	*Association pour le Développement et l'Appui aux Communautés*
ADEPA	*Association Ouest Africaine pour le Développement de le Pêche Artisanale*
ADG	*Association pour l'Appui au Développement Global*
AEC	*Aide à l'Enfance Canada*
AEDEM	*Agence Évangélique de Développement du Mali*
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFIP	*Association des Femmes pour les Initiatives de Paix*
AI	Amnesty International
AID	*Association Internationale pour la Démocratie*
AMDH	*Association Malienne des Droits de l'Homme*
ASERNI	*Association d'Etude et de Mise en Valeur des Ressources Naturelles et des Institutions*
ASG	*Association Subaahi Gumo*
BNDA	*Banque Nationale pour le Développement Agricole*
CAFO	*Coordination des Associations et ONG Féminines*
CBO	Community-based Organization
COBAS	*Coopérative de Commercialisation de Bétails et d'Approvisionnement de l'Abattoir de Sikasso*
CEACY	*La Coopérative des Exploitants Agricoles Caha Ygnion*
CMDT	*Compagnie Malienne des Textiles*
CNLPAL	*Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre la Prolifération des Armes Légères*
CONGACI	*Collectif des ONG Actives de Côte d'Ivoire*
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CUA-CI	*Club de l'Union Africaine - Section Côte d'Ivoire*
CV-CI	*La Croix Verte de Côte d'Ivoire*
Dozos	*Confrérie des Chasseurs Traditionnels*
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOWATCH	ECOWAS Conflict Monitoring Mechanism
EU	European Union
FEN	National Federation of Teachers
FOFCI	*Fédération des Organisations. Féminines de Côte d'Ivoire*
FPP	*Forum des Partis Politiques*
FR	*Front Républicain*
GDRN5	*Réseau Gestion Décentralisée des Ressources Naturelles Mopti*
GERDDES	*Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches sur la Démocratie et le Développement Economique et Social*
GOM	Government of Mali
INAGEF	*Institut Africain de Gestion et de Formation*

LIDH	*Institut Africain de Gestion et de Formation*
MNFSPUN	*Le Mouvement National des Femmes pour la Sauvegarde de la Paix et de l'Unité Nationale*
OIMPJ	*Observatoire de l'Indépendance de la Magistrature et du Pouvoir Judiciaire*
OLPED	*Observatoire de la Liberté de la Presse de l'Ethique et de la Déontologie*
PCASED	*Programme de Coordination et d'Assistance pour la Sécurité et le Développement*
PDCI-RDA	*Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire - Rassemblement des Africaine*
Plateforme Paysanne	*Coordination National de la Plate Forme des Organisations Paysannes*
RANCPAL – MALI	*Réseau D'action Nationale Contre la Prolifération des Armes Légères*
RIOF	*Réseau Ivoirien des Organisations Féminines*
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SEAD	*Sahel Étude Action Développement*
SYCOV	*Syndicat des Producteurs de Coton et Culture Vivrières*
SYNARES	*Syndicat National de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur* (Teacher's Trade Union)
UN	United Nations
UNCTRM	*Union Nationale des Coopératives de Transporteurs Routiers du Mali*
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAFAG	*Vision et Action des Femmes Africaines contre les Guerres*
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peace Building

I. Introduction and Overview

This synthesis report covers the assessment of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali and their capacity to undertake conflict prevention and management functions. The overall assessment examined CSO conflict resolution capacity at three levels: (a) the local community level, (b) around issues of with a national scope, and (c) those conflicts that had a "cross-border" or subregional dimension. This assessment is one of two studies (the other being an assessment of Anglophone countries) conducted for the West Africa Regional Program of USAID as part of a broader study entitled "West Africa: Civil Society Strengthening for Conflict Prevention."

A total of five consultants worked on these assessments — an international team leader, two Malian consultants, one Ivoirian consultant, and a regional western African consultant. The field work was conducted over a period of three weeks in August and September 2001.

The study was guided by several key hypotheses that oriented the research. First, it was hypothesized that the type of CSO would make a considerable difference in their degree of capacity and actual experience in conflict prevention and mitigation. For the purpose of this study, CSOs were classified as either *primary-level CSOs* including traditional community-based organizations (CBOs)*; intermediary CSOs* including classic nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as well as associations of CBOs (e.g., unions, cooperatives and other federated bodies); and *tertiary*, national-level apex or umbrella associations and associations offering specialized services such as training to CSOs nationally. We thought that this distinction was important because we hypothesized that different types of CSOs would be likely to engage in different types of conflict management tasks.

A second hypothesis was that CSOs that are better developed in terms of their formal structure, and are more democratic, accountable and participatory in their working methods would have more capacity to successfully engage in civic action. It was further hypothesized that those associations that had more overall capacity to engage in civic action would have more capacity to engage in conflict prevention and management work.[1]

Third, the study hypothesized that the nature of the enabling environment for CSO work and for its linkage to governmental institutions would be important in the kinds of capacity that had emerged and the range of conflict activities already undertaken. Since this study was conducted mainly by interviewing CSO respondents, it emphasizes not so much a legal or institutional analysis of the enabling environment as the perceptions of CSO leaders of the nature of the legal, policy and regulatory environment and whether they believed that it favored CSO participation or not in such "public" acts as conflict prevention and management for that environment. This perceptual data is, however, complemented by interviews with key informants in government, in political parties, and in the media to get a somewhat more objective image.

[1] For a full explanation of the definitions employed and the items used to collect particular information on capacity and civic action experience see the Assessment Methodology Instrument developed for use in both the Francophone and Anglophone country-level assessments, labeled as Annex 1 of this report.

Finally, the study hypothesized that the kind and degree of conflict management work noted would be a function of the stage in the development of particular conflicts. We classified the phases of conflict as *pre-violence*, *ongoing violence*, *and post violence*, and hypothesized that the predominant types of conflict work — *conflict prevention*, mitigation or *escalation prevention*, and resolution or *post-conflict prevention* — observed would be conditioned by the phase of the conflict. Of course, for the capacity assessment studies we were not focused on a single conflict as we were in the Casamance and in the Mano River Union states. In fact, we were able to identify a number of different conflicts within each country and among the national actors, so that a number of different kinds of conflict management work could be going on simultaneously as CSOs got involved in different kinds of disputes. These different conflicts and the different roles that CSOs were able to play are developed in the "mini-case studies" found in Annex 4 of this report. In addition, we give a number of much briefer "anecdotes" drawn from the interviews conducted with the CSOs in both cases. These are useful, we think, in giving a sense not only of the broad range of issues in which CSOs can and do attempt to play roles in preventing and mitigating conflict, but begin to offer a list of "best practices" from their experiences. These anecdotes are found in Annex 5.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- Section II explores the concept of conflict resolution and prevention that serves as a common conceptual section for all the other assessment studies.
- Section III presents an overall discussion of the nature of conflict in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali.
- Section IV provides an analysis of the enabling environmental factors — the legal, policy and regulatory conditions pertaining in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali and the degree to which they encourage or discourage CSO participation in such public acts as conflict prevention and management.
- Section V examines the types of CSOs that the team found in both societies.
- Section VI examines the three dimensions of CSO capacity: internal democratic governance, internal management capacity, and capacity for civic action (including conflict resolution work) in the CSOs studied in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali.
- Section VII discusses the role that Ivoirian and Malian CSOs can and do play in conflicts outside their national frontiers and in the region.

II. Conflict Resolution and Prevention: Operationalizing the Terms

Our assessments cover four of the most important countries in West Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire) in terms of their geographical size, abundance of resources and military strength. In this sense they give direction to regional peace, security and development priorities. The conflict and security situation differs considerably from one country to the next. Ghana is considered to be one of the most peaceful countries in West Africa. Nigeria, on the other hand, struggles with many types of internal conflict. After a long period of internal peace and stability, Côte d'Ivoire has now joined the list of countries where internal conflicts seriously affect internal order and presents a potential threat to the subregion. Mali, having resolved its long and fratricidal civil war, is among the more successful countries for the maintenance of internal peace. At the same time, several of these countries, notably Mali and Nigeria, have played leading roles in the management of subregional and civil conflicts in West Africa, through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations (UN). All of the countries studied here have experienced recent traditions to democratic regimes, and not without difficulties. Ghana's transition has been the most peaceful. Côte d'Ivoire is still struggling to work out its new regime in terms of identity politics. Nigeria's long night of military rule did little to prepare it for civil conflict management and violence is still resorted to all too commonly. These transition histories, coupled with different colonial pasts, have profound implications for the roles and functioning of CSOs. While in the Anglophone countries CSOs are much denser and broadly organized, they are not necessarily better equipped to deal with conflict. In all four societies, conflict resolution is a relatively new function for CSOs and none are yet well equipped with material resources. Perhaps more importantly, all function in an environment in which states have yet to fully appreciate and support the value of "Track II" citizen-based diplomacy. This is particularly ironic given the fact that many observers have noted the growth in capacity of communities to govern themselves, including dealing with potentially violent conflicts in the face of reduced capacity of central states to play that role.

This study takes a comprehensive, dynamic conception of both the causes of conflict, and the means to resolve and prevent it. Specifically, conflicts have multiple sources at *intra*national levels, such as: 1) structural, i.e., social hierarchies and cleavages; 2) economic, i.e., control of resources; 3) institutional, i.e., legitimacy and control of political and military institutions; and 4) cultural and identity, i.e., dominant and oppositional value systems. Manifestations of the same sources of *inter*national conflict might include: 1) dominance of some states of the region over others; 2) growth in the flow of goods and labor within the region and the integration of the regional economy with the international system; 3) competitive support of some actors in the region by powerful external actors; and 4) competitive appeal of values and culture, such as religion and ethnicity.

To resolve conflict or build peace thus requires addressing multiple sources of conflicts, and is best done through a variety of methods. This is particularly the case in transitional, developing countries where there are many competing, critical national priorities, and thus the potential for conflict to erupt is much greater. In societies with faltering or failing economies, for example, the problem is made much more severe as high levels of unemployment leave youth idle and susceptible to joining groups engaging in crime or violence.

The concept of CSO employed in this study is also very broad, including many different types of actors and groups employing many different types of strategies. The concept employed for this study, however, involved the following elements—voluntary organization, significant autonomy from the state, and the pursuit of "public purposes" including the prevention or resolution of conflict on behalf of a broader public. Organizations that seems to fit these criteria included groups whose primary purposes involved conflict resolution/peace, democracy, development, human rights, women/gender, youth, as well as the pursuit of professional interests.

Conflict prevention is also understood in this study in a broad manner to include:

- ***Conflict prevention:*** preventing violent disputes from arising between parties either by structural, institutional, economic, or cultural remedies;
- ***Escalation prevention:*** preventing both vertical and horizontal escalation of hostilities to more destructive means of warfare and to involve additional actors;
- ***Post-conflict prevention:*** preventing the reemergence of disputes by reintegrating and reconstructing the war-torn society.[2]

[2] Janie Leatherman, William DeMars, Patrick D. Gaffney, Raimo Vayrynen. 1999. *Breaking Cycles of Violence: Conflict Prevention in Intrastate Crises.* Conneticutt: Kumarian Press.

III. Civil Society

A. Mali

Malian civil society is, along with that of Senegal, the strongest and most developed among the countries of West Africa. There are several reasons for this.

Associational life in Mali has always been strong. Traditional associations involved in such areas as resource management, mutual aid, economic support and cultural promotion characterize a diverse and dense associational landscape that has thrived throughout the worst of times in Mali — including the colonial era as well succeeding dictatorships under the First and Second Republics. The ability of the Malian people to associate so easily for collective purposes is an indication of a high degree of social capital, which in terms of conflict resolution means a propensity for tolerance, inclusion and trust — all values needed for avoiding if not managing conflict.

The great Sahelian droughts of the 1970s and 1980s brought with them dozens of international NGOs first working in emergency relief and later in more traditional development sectors. Over the years, these international NGOs gave birth to and/or nurtured the development of an indigenous NGO sector. Throughout this period and carrying over into the 1990s, international donors, with USAID in the forefront, made use of international NGOs and their Malian counterparts as the principal means for implementing their sectoral programs. Increasingly, international NGOs received funding and were charged with the task of building the capacity of Malian NGOs.

By the mid-1990s, international donors, primarily working through international NGOs, began to support a wide range of emerging CSOs to help consolidate Mali's new democracy. USAID in particular developed a targeted capacity-building program for Malian intermediary NGOs and the CBOs with whom they worked. In addition to strengthening internal dimensions of CSO capacity, including democratic governance practices and traditional management skills, the training focused on developing a capacity for CSO civic action including advocacy vis-à-vis both newly created communal governments and government at higher levels of administration.

Finally, with the transition to democracy in Mali in 1992, a favorable legal, policy and regulatory environment governing CSO participation in public life led to a proliferation of new organizations. While primarily involved in traditional social, economic and environmental programs, they increasingly engaged in such "nontraditional" civic action activities as human rights monitoring, anti-corruption efforts and conflict resolution.

As a result of these factors, Malian civil society has developed a tremendous density and diversity leading to a significant differentiation of organizations both structurally and functionally. At the base of Malian civil society is an enormous variety of primary-level CBOs. While traditional and informal associations predominate, a new more modern and formal group of CBOs has emerged in the past decade that has a decidedly public character, and engages in such activities as primary school and community health center management, agricultural production and marketing, and women's savings and credit. Of the 20 CSOs interviewed, only

the Association of Fishermen in Mopti and the Association of Cattle Raisers in Sikasso were considered primary-level CSOs.[3]

A far smaller but still significant number of CSOs occupy the intermediary level of association. Classic NGOs, often modeled on their northern counterparts, have flourished largely as a result of international donor and NGO support. One of the principal findings of this country study is the fact that these intermediary NGOs have moved increasingly away from direct social and economic service delivery to strengthening the capacity of their CBO partners as well as federated bodies to undertake these tasks. While the classic NGO has tended to dominate the intermediate level of civil society, increasingly a burgeoning number of federated bodies and sub-national networks have emerged to support their member CSOs. These sectoral and geographically based associations promote and defend their social, economic and political interests vis-à-vis government at all levels. Fifteen intermediary CSOs (75 percent of the total) were interviewed for the study of which the majority were classic NGOs (e.g., *Institut Africain de Gestion et de Formation* [INAGEF], *Association d'Appui à l'Auto Développement Communautaire* [AADeC]). A far smaller number were federated bodies or networks (*Réseau Gestion Décentralisée des Ressources Naturelles Mopti* [GDRN5], UNCTM).

At the summit of this "pyramidal" civil society structure is a relatively small but growing number of tertiary-level or specialized support CSOs whose principal functions are (a) providing support (e.g., capacity building, representation, research) to intermediary CSOs; and (b) engaging national government over a range of issues that affect Malian civil society as a whole. The team interviewed three of these specialized CSOs, including the national-level federation of peasant farmers (*Platforme Paysanne*), a woman's NGO apex organizations (*Coordination des Associations et ONG Féminines* [CAFO]), and a research and training organization (*Association d'Etude et de Mise en Valeur des Ressources Naturelles et des Institutions* [ASERNI]).

B. Côte d'Ivoire

Civil society in Côte d'Ivoire is, in comparison to Mali and most other West African countries, quite weak. This is surprising given the relative political stability of the country and its economic success, at least through the 1980s. There are reasons for this, however, and among the more important the following are noted.

Some societies within Côte d'Ivoire, notably the Akan and Dyula, are characterized by strong associative traditions, mobilizing people locally around interests (hunters, traders) and social status (age organizations). This made for a diverse and density-associational life at the primary level. Associative life is very weak in terms of well-differentiated and specialized associations above this level, however, due to a number of historical factors. The long reign of Felix Houphouët-Boigny and his ruling party (PDCI-RDA), while generally benign, inhibited the development of more modern traditional associations and intermediary-level NGOs and federated bodies. Those that did exist were organized by the party/state along traditional corporatist lines found in much of Africa. Their participation was therefore structured and limited. One-party rule until the death of the country's president in the early 1990s further discouraged the development of a more mature civil society.

[3] One of the principal lacuna of this study was the lack of CBOs interviewed. This largely due to time constraints, not interest.

The political culture of Ivoirian society has permitted a far lower level of non-kinship-based social capital to develop than is the case of its Malian counterpart. While not rooted in systematic investigation, this conclusion emerges from the fact that the team found that notions of inclusiveness and tolerance are much less present in Ivoirian political culture. Social capital, we believe, is a prerequisite to a society's capacity for resolving public problems, including social conflict. The bitter and intractable political conflicts that have arisen since the mid-1990s are indicative of a current deficit of social capital.

The capacity of Ivoirian CSOs suffered in part due to the country's good luck. Because Côte d'Ivoire did not suffer a major calamity, manmade (war) or natural (drought, famine), it never was the subject of much attention by international NGOs. As was noted in the Malian study and demonstrated elsewhere in West Africa, international NGOs — often with donor support, have been the principal stimulus for the creation or nurturing of an indigenous and often autonomous NGO sector. They have also been the principal source of capacity-building assistance to local NGOs and CBOs from the 1990s.

Neither did Côte d'Ivoire attract much attention from the classic development NGOs because its "economic miracle" managed to prevent the extreme poverty found in countries to the north at least until the early 1980s. These development NGOs are often a precursor to civil society's emergence. As a result an independent grouping of non-state actors did not develop very powerfully in Côte d'Ivoire.

Finally, nontraditional civil society also developed later in Côte d'Ivoire than it did in countries like Mali that began their democratization process in 1992. Nontraditional CSOs that undertake such civic action activities as human rights monitoring, anti-corruption efforts and conflict resolution normally only emerge once political liberalization is well under way. Added to this is the fact that the democratic transition that eventually did take place has largely been stalled due to the inability of political elites to agree on the rules of electoral politics, and more generally, a rule of law that encouraged the inclusion and participation of all societal actors in democratic politics.

There has been some differentiation (structural characteristic) and specialization (functional roles) of associational life in Côte d'Ivoire. These are indicators of civil society's development. These factors, however, are much less advanced than in Mali. A wide range of CBOs exists at the primary level. Mutual aid societies proliferate, as do a large number of economically oriented associations, reflecting the much greater economic activity that has been, until recently, a distinguishing factor of the country's development. With the exception of the economic associations (e.g., primary cooperatives, credit associations, producer groups), far fewer modern CBOs have emerged in Côte d'Ivoire than in Mali. As a result, far fewer CBOs of either a modern or traditional cast (e.g., hunters, *griots*) have taken on public tasks such as representation or the defense and promotion of member interests. Of the 15 CSOs interviewed in Côte d'Ivoire, only three associations, those representing traditional chiefs and hunters and a primary cooperative in Korhogo, were considered primary-level CSOs.

Surprisingly, this study found fewer Ivoirian CSOs occupying the intermediary level of association than might have been expected and than exist in Mali and in many other African countries. One of the principal reasons for this is the historically small number of international donors and NGOs that established operations in Côte d'Ivoire. Elsewhere these donors provided the assistance necessary to first foster NGO development and later build their capacity over time.

Our discussions with the full range of Côte d'Ivoire respondents indicated that most intermediary NGOs were still engaged in the delivery of development services (e.g., health, agriculture, micro-enterprise) to the local level rather than building the capacity of grassroots CBOs to undertake these tasks on their own. Primary-level cocoa cooperatives and producer groups are an exception to this generalization. There is also a dearth of federated bodies and sectoral or geographically based subnational networks. Such networks are usually capable of supporting their member CBOs, including promoting and defending their social, economic and political interests vis-à-vis government at all levels. The two intermediary CSOs interviewed, i.e., *Club de l'Union Africaine* (CUA) and *Notre Nation*, were classic NGOs. We were unable to find any federated bodies or networks at the subnational level.

Similarly surprising was the finding that there were a relatively large number of tertiary-level or specialized support CSOs whose principal functions are (a) providing support (e.g., capacity building, representation, research) to intermediary CSOs; and (b) engaging national government over a range of issues that affect Ivoirian civil society as a whole. The team interviewed ten of these specialized CSOs including the national-level federation of teachers (SYNARES), a woman's NGO apex organizations (*Fédération des Organisations. Féminines de Côte d'Ivoire* [FOFCI]), two national-level professional associations (*Observatoire de l'Indépendance de la Magistrature et du Pouvoir Judiciaire* [OIMPJ] and *Observatoire de la Liberté de la Presse de l'Ethique et de la Déontologie* [OLPED]), four human rights organizations (GERRDES, Amnesty International [AI], *Institut Africain de Gestion et de Formation* [LIDH] and MIDH), and a research and training organization (*Association Internationale pour la Démocratie* [AID]). Two of these human rights organizations were the branches of international NGOs.

C. Principal Conclusions

This study found that the effectiveness of individual CSOs to undertake conflict management and prevention is as much the result of the strength of civil society overall, as it is in the specific capacities (skills, tools, strategies) that they develop and bring to bear in conflict situations. This includes the horizontal and vertical relationships that are developed between CSOs at the three levels of association (structure), and the various tasks that different CSOs undertake on behalf of their counterparts at these three levels (function). This conclusion is expanded upon in the following three sections.

The normal structure of a mature, well-differentiated and functionally specialized civil society is a pyramid with a broad base of primary associations, a smaller group of intermediary NGOs and federated bodies, and a small number of specialized CSOs at the summit. In Côte d'Ivoire quite a different pattern was found. The relatively large number of specialized CSOs at the top indicates that power and decision making has been centralized in Côte d'Ivoire. Non-state actors have tended to cluster around this concentration of state power, an outgrowth of clientelism established during colonial times through patterns of cash crop production and marketing.

The problem that this poses for civil society's role in policy advocacy and conflict resolution is that there are few CSO intermediaries that are capable of linking the broad base of CBOs with specialized CSOs at the summit. This decreases the capability of civil society to act as a coherent whole, with each level supporting the role of the other. Considering that it is at the local level

where many conflicts take place and/or where their impacts are felt, CBOs appear to be largely on their own in trying to address these problems.

The relative weakness of Ivoirian civil society is intimately tied to its inability to undertake conflict prevention and management functions. It is due, at least in part, to the fact that the Ivoirian political system is unstable. To the extent that this condition has not fundamentally changed, it is not likely that Ivoirian CSOs will be able to play a highly effective role in conflict resolution functions.

On the other hand, one of the conclusions of this study is that CBOs are the least corruptible level of society, even in Côte d'Ivoire and therefore constitute the ideal level at which foreign actors can invest in order to try to solve difficult problems. In addition, CBOs are important for the linkages and networks which develop between them and intermediary CSOs and that serve to knit the society together.

IV. The Legal, Policy and Regulatory Environment

A favorable legal, policy and regulatory environment are essential if CSOs are going to participate in such civic or public actions as conflict management and prevention. At the same time, without well-established, clearly defined and equitably applied "rules of the game," the contestation for, access to, and use of public goods and services will necessarily lead to conflict among competing societal interests. Our interviews and survey questionnaire focused on both these functions in the legal, policy and regulatory environments of Mali and Côte d'Ivoire. This analysis was aimed at analyzing whether CSOs are enabled or constrained in undertaking conflict prevention and management functions. It also attempts to discern whether this environment is itself a cause for conflict either because critical rules of the game did not exist, or if they did, whether they were enforced.

In addition to the legal framework, the study also examined the institutional context to determine whether existing state institutions were capable of designing, enforcing and adjudicating the rules of the game (e.g., laws, policies, regulations), thus helping to resolve conflict, or whether they were not able to do so, thus contributing to conflict.

A. Mali

Perception is important. Eighty percent of the CSOs interviewed that responded to this question found the legal context favorable or enabling. A good deal of this is the result of the advent of democracy in Mali allowing for broadened CSO participation in a range of governance functions, including the making and implementation of public policy and the resolution of public problems. CSOs in Mali have stepped into the new space created by democratization and an increased number of new laws and policies have promoted their participation in such areas as natural resource management, comanagement of primary schools and community health centers, as well as monitoring governments' performance in the discharge of the public's business.

Among the major changes that have taken place in the Malian legal, policy and regulatory environment that have opened the door to greater CSO participation are decentralization and local government formation. A number of principal functions (*competences*) have been or are in the process of being devolved to local governments, including responsibility for primary education, health, local infrastructure and natural resource management. One of our principal findings in this regard, which is expanded upon in Section VI, is that as these functions have been transferred from the national to local government levels, so too have many of the conflicts that were evidenced in the previous era of centralized administration and governance. The whole process of decentralization, from redistricting to the allocation and management of public resources, has thus engendered its own set of conflicts.

While the environment for CSO participation in the area of conflict prevention and management was found to be favorable, and while the legal and institutional environments in Mali have improved greatly since the beginning of the Third Republic, a number of problems still remain that cause or exacerbate conflict, including:

- There is an absence of an effective and fair judiciary capable of adjudicating competing interests as a *sine qua non* for ensuring social peace and resolving conflict.

- An archaic registration process dating from colonial times and still required is in effect for most CSOs, including primary-level associations, intermediate NGOs and most types of tertiary organizations. Labor unions and professional associations do not fall under the 1959 Law of Associations, and for the past five years the Government of Mali (GOM) has been debating and drafting a new law governing associations, cooperatives and credit unions. The fact that it has still not been passed is an indication of the sensitivities within the Malian state associated with the notion of unrestricted freedom of association.
- The legal framework for implementing decentralization is still incomplete. Several major pieces of legislation remain unwritten and the necessary implementing laws for others have not been passed. Principal among these are laws addressing resource transfers from central to local governments and laws dealing with control over natural resources at the local government level, particularly those pertaining to the allocation and management of land.
- Institutional structure and status for historically important parastatal organizations including the *Office du Niger* (Ségou), *Compagnie Malienne des Textiles* (CMDT in Sikasso) and *Office du Ris* (Mopti) remain unclear. These organizations manage food and cash crop production, transformation and marketing in different parts of the countries and have since colonial times. That lack of clarity is causing conflicts between farmers and local governments on the one hand and central government on the other.
- The failure of both national and subregional actors to develop and consistently apply laws governing interstate commence is directly linked to a number of cross-border conflicts. These include issues of harassment of producers and merchants at border crossings, and problems of the movement of children across national frontiers linked to concern over child trafficking. The lack of clarity and consistent application of these laws is contributing to competition for and the use of resources among ethnic groups. Specifically, problems with bilateral agreements between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as ECOWAS policies and regulations have been and continue to be a principal cause of cross-border conflict.

B. Côte d'Ivoire

Somewhat surprisingly, this study found that 11 of the 15 CSOs interviewed and that responded to this question contended that the legal context is favorable. Two of the three CBOs had no real opinion since the formal legal system was unrelated to their ability to operate. In the new constitution (July 2000), there is strong reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the state's commitment to safeguard them. Much like Mali, the Law of Associations (*Loi 60-315 du 21 septembre 1960*) that governs the formation of all forms of association except labor unions and some professional associations, dates from the colonial era. It provides a fairly easy set of requirements for registration, and succeeding governments seem to have done little to constrain this right. The application of the concerned law governing trade and labor unions has also been positive.

An indication of Côte d'Ivoire civil society's treatment by the government has been the prominent role it played (at government invitation) in a range of important political forums over the past decade. Examples of this participation include the fact that the president of the country's

first National Election Commission is the president of one of the most prominent NGOs, *Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches sur la Démocratie et le Développement Economique et Social* (GERDDES). The speaker of the directorate managing the ongoing "Forum de la Reconciliation Nationale" is the president of the Côte d'Ivoire National Union of Journalists. CSOs, primarily national-level specialized organizations, have been invited to participate alongside the government in national workshops covering issues ranging from women's rights to environmental protection.

What has not happened, however, is the actual participation of CSOs in any meaningful form of governance. They are largely unable to contribute to the formulation of public policy or the delivery of public services below the national level, for example. This is in stark contrast to the situation in Mali where CSOs from the national to local levels have increasingly gained recognition as partners in the country's development.

The principal legal and institutional reforms that have encouraged this in Mali, decentralization and the creation of autonomous and democratically elected local governments, are totally absent in Côte d'Ivoire. Whether this is a reflection of the desire to maintain control at the center by various Ivorian governments or just a coincidence, the impact has been to deny CSOs entry into arenas of decision making that are close to them, potentially sympathetic to their views, and capable of participating in the numerous conflicts whose origins are most often local.

In addition, a number of other constraints tend to inhibit both CSO participation in conflict resolution and actually provoke conflict in some cases. These include:

- The establishment of an effective and fair judiciary capable of adjudicating competing interests is a *sine qua non* for ensuring social peace and resolving conflict in any country. The judiciary in Côte d'Ivoire is both corrupt and weak, thus leaving a major gap in conflict resolution institutions and processes.
- Most CSOs apart from labor, must continue to be registered, under the 1960 (colonial era) Law of Associations. The lack of more modern laws governing associations, particularly at the local level and among federated bodies, means that important areas of CSO participation in social, economic and political life remain undefined.
- The Ivoirian governmental institutions are unresponsive to the public in their administration of the law. This has served as a principal cause of conflict either directly or through the nonenforcement of laws and regulations.
- The ongoing political conflict results in a breakdown in the social contract between the government and its people and the loss of consensus among political elites over the contestation of power. Many of the conflicts examined in this study, whether over access to natural resources, educational reform, or ethnicity, are the result of fundamental societal cleavages that have become politicized for political gain.
- The **interstate regional legal environment** also affects CSOs and the incidence of conflict in and between Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. As already discussed for Mali, most cross-border conflicts (e.g., harassment of commercial actors at border crossings, management of ethnic tensions) are as much the result of ill-conceived, nonexistent or poorly enforced subregional laws and policies as they are from the presumed root causes of these conflicts, i.e., competition for and the use of resources. The lack of binding bilateral agreements between states like Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso as well as

the failure to enforce ECOWAS policies and conventions have been and continue to be principal causes of cross-border conflict.

C. Principal Conclusions

The Mali study has made clear that getting the legal and institutional environment right can decrease the likelihood of conflict as it establishes the rules of the game and defines the rights and responsibilities of concerned societal (and intersocietal) actors in the allocation and management collective resources and in the making and implementation of public decisions. While Mali has made a significant start in addressing problems in the legal and institutional environments, it still has a considerable way to go before the macro-context prevents the emergence of conflict or at least provides the means for peaceful conflict management.

Two additional conclusions emerge from this analysis of Mali's legal and institutional environment:

1) The government realizes it is unable to improve the country's socioeconomic welfare on its own.
2) The locus of problem solving, including conflict resolution, must move from the center to newly established communal governments at the local level.

Both conclusions have contributed to opening up new possibilities for civil society's participation in a wide range of governance functions, including conflict prevention and management that simply were not possible or imagined previously.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the CSOs interviewed during this assessment were mainly urban-based and elite-led organizations with few linkages to or roots in grassroots communities. Their view that the legal and institutional context is favorable reflects their ability to operate with few constraints rather than whether they are able to participate in a meaningful or effective way in solving public problems. A conflicted polity makes solving conflicts, particularly at the local level, difficult at best.

We conclude that an extremely favorable enabling environment for civil society participation in conflict resolution exists in Mali from the national to local level and to a lesser extent across borders. What many CSOs in Mali now lack are the skills, knowledge and experience to take advantage of this new opening.

Overall, the environment is not nearly as promising for CSOs in their efforts to play constructive and effective roles in domestic and cross-border conflicts. Until the macro-political rules find consensus among the principal institutional actors, Ivoirian CSOs will continue to confront this much less favorable environment and will subsequently have fewer opportunities to be effective public actors in their own right.

V. The Nature of Conflicts

To provide a context for the assessment of CSO capacity in the area of conflict prevention and management, it is instructive to examine the principal types of conflicts that these organizations have been involved in over the past decade in each country.

A. Principal Findings in Mali

1. The Growing Awareness of Democratic and Civic Rights

Many local conflicts in which CSOs become involved arise when peasants begin to learn about their rights as citizens in a democratic setting. The conflict between school headmasters and parents, for instance, has been growing with regularity since the mid-1990s when international NGOs with funding from donors began strengthening their local counterparts to work with parent associations to increase their role in primary school management and the broader governance of the overall education system.

2. Traditional versus Modern Values and Practices

One of the principal findings of this study is that conflicts often arise when traditional values and practices come into conflict with modern ones. In the case of child trafficking for example, parents often give their children to religious teachers, other relatives, to craftsmen (as apprentices), and even acquaintances for a range of reasons (e.g., schooling, work, money, etc). This behavior worked well in the traditional community and in much less monetized economies. As the market, however, has penetrated Mali to the community level, labor has become a commodity and men, women and children have been exploited as a result. The conflict between traditional values and practices of conferring responsibility for children to others and modern ones that oppose the "exploitation" of children has generated social conflict in a wide range of areas.

This conflict of values also pits international NGOs, Western media and several Western governments, notably the US, Britain and the European Union (EU) against African governments like those of Mali and Côte d'Ivoire and their citizens. This study found that issues like child trafficking are raised to international status by these Western institutions, led by Western media outlets, rather than parents or cocoa farmers.

3. The Legal and Institutional Environment

The inability of national governments and subregional organizations to formulate effective laws to regulate the movement of goods and people across borders contributes to conflicts between nomadic cattle herders and cattle transporters both at the national and international levels.

The failure of the laws to adequately define both the status of parastatal economic actors, like the cotton parastatal, CMDT, and their relationship to newly established local governments results in a great deal of conflict. This conflict is not only between producers and those development

authorities issuing prices, grading standards, and delays in making payments, it is also over control of the most important resource the local governments might have, the land.

4. Divergent Societal Interests

The school crisis in Mali has been an ongoing affair since the change of regimes in 1990. Student organizations and teachers unions were at the forefront of the pro-democracy movement. Promises were made to them as a result of this support, many of which have not been honored due to budgetary constraints. These problems have been exacerbated by the politicization of the student movement by competing political parties.

5. Access To and Use Of Natural Resources

The majority of conflicts in Mali are the result of a limited natural resource base and many competing interests. The Djenne Dam conflict (discussed as a mini-case in Annex 4 of this report) brings out a number of very interesting findings in this regard. Conflicts over resources can quickly translate into conflict among ethnic and socio-professional groups. This case also demonstrates that, given the political space to work things out, conflicts over resources that mobilize ethnic groups can be resolved in ways that encourage a view of mutual dependency and potential mutual gain.

6. Decentralization

Devolution of competencies to the newly created local governments (*communes*) without the corresponding resources has resulted in considerable conflict over resources, local government boundaries, the sharing of tax revenues, and the responsibility to pay local-level officials.

B. Principal Findings in Côte d'Ivoire

1. The Breakdown of Political Consensus: What Role Civil Society?

Following the death of the country's founding president, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire has seen a general breakdown of agreement by the political elite around the rules of the electoral game. The unwillingness of the PDCI, the former president's party, to agree to rules promoting free and fair elections was the basic cause of the conflict. Ultimately, this lack of consensus by the political class led to contested elections in 1995 and a *coup d'état* in 1999. Furthermore, many other major societal cleavages, from ethnicity, to control of over natural resources, and a generational divide, were caught up in the ensuing conflict and used by political forces to advance their narrow interests, essentially bringing the country to an economic, social and political halt.

Into the political breach stepped a number of CSOs and CSO coalitions to try and address both the principal political problem and its social and economic permutations. Both religious and human rights groups attempted to ameliorate the situation. The intervention by GERDDES-CI and its efforts to mediate the dispute, and the formation of the "collective" following the conflicted 1995 elections are good illustrations of civil society efforts in these kinds of political disputes. In spite of a fairly broad-based coalition of civil society actors involving religious

groups, human rights groups, women's organizations and democracy promotion groups, the "collective" failed largely because the political parties saw little benefit to reaching consensus on the rules governing electoral competition. Instead they seemed to prefer extra-constitutional solutions. As is discussed in the following conflict category, CSOs were perceived to have lost their neutrality as honest brokers. Most CSOs had, in fact, become extremely politicized in the years following the 1995 elections. They had little to build upon except partisanship, given the newness and weakness of links among CSOs at same level and between intermediary and tertiary CSOs when such links existed at all.

The principal conclusion and lesson learned from the numerous attempts of CSOs to engage in conflict resolution efforts over the past decade is that political society is a far more powerful force than is civil society, particularly a civil society that has succumbed to partisanship. Until the country's political elites reach some type of accommodation over the rules governing political contestation, it is unlikely that CSOs in Côte d'Ivoire will have much success in resolving conflicts in a number of critical areas. In this vein, it is unclear whether civil society's participation in the newly created (presidential) *Forum pour la réconciliation nationale* will produce different results.

2. The Case of National Identity: Who is an Ivoirian?

Nothing is more fundamental in terms of societal consensus than national identity. In Africa, with its artificially constructed borders, the temptation to use national identity as a political device to gain and hold power has been all too common, while political work and financial investment on constructing these identities has been weak or nonexistent.

Côte d'Ivoire has unfortunately succumbed to this divisive issue in recent years and it has been a source of major conflict both internally and with its neighbors. Malians and Burkinabés have lived and worked in the much more economically developed Côte d'Ivoire since the colonial era. As the economy began declining in the 1980s, and as this trend accelerated in the 1990s, nationals from both countries increasingly became the targets of harassment, often with the Ivoirian state turning a blind eye. The conflict over land in the country's west and southwest regions (see below) was rooted in an economic conflict in which national identity was used to drive Malian and Burkinabé settlers, as well as settlers from northern Côte D'Ivoire, off the land they had been cultivating for decades.

The use of national identity as a political wedge came to a head with the 2000 elections in which Alassane Ouattara was declared ineligible as a candidate for president because of the allegation that his mother was from territory now known as Burkina Faso. Given the fact that national identity is intertwined with ethnic politics, Côte d'Ivoire's political leaders have essentially torn asunder the country's underlying social contract about citizenship and angered a large commercial network.

3. From Autonomous Reform Champions to Co-opted Anti-Reformers

The failure of the civil society collective to mediate the 1995 political conflict and the general ineffectiveness of civil society to manage conflict management have been the result of its politicization. Our interviews with Côte d'Ivoire respondents made it clear that CSOs of all

stripes, whether confessional and human rights organizations, trade unions, women's organizations or professional groups, had lost much of their neutrality and hence trust as effective mediators in most types of conflicts. This fact should not be surprising given the extreme politicization and even polarization found in Ivoirian society as a whole.

This contrasts to the role that many CSOs played in the early days of pro-reform multiparty politics prior to the 1995 elections. As was the case in many African countries during the early 1990s, trade unions, student groups, and professional associations, among others led the call for multiparty democracy. Following the ensuing democratic transitions, many pro-democracy coalitions broke up with individual members following their particular interests in the new context. These interests were not always to the benefit of democratic consolidation. One of the best examples of this change of heart was that of the Ivoirian teacher's trade union, SYNARES.

SYNARES was the principal non-state actor challenging the Ivoirian state. It was a major force calling for the return of Alassane Ouattara in the hope that he could redress the country's economic crisis. Following the 1995 elections, SYNARES increasingly became one of the principal backers of the current regime. It shifted from being a champion of reform to a defender of the status quo. In the process, SYNARES lost a good deal of its credibility vis-à-vis other CSOs because it has essentially become a think tank and leadership recruitment ground for the ruling party. What SYNARES did demonstrate, however, is the capacity for policy research, analysis and advocacy as principal tools in engaging power holders around conflictual situations. This is highly relevant to the effectiveness of CSOs in conflict resolution.

4. The Legal and Institutional Environment

Laws and their enforcement are one means of defining rules and incentives that govern the actions of citizens over a range of issues. Good rules and their consistent application are thus an important means for preventing and managing conflict. One of the principal areas of conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, as it is elsewhere, is over access to and use of natural resources. This study reviewed a number of such situations, particularly related to land and forest use. In the past two years the government has passed several new laws, notably a forestry code and a land use law, primarily designed to determine land ownership rights and to protect and conserve forests. The new land law now vests land in the state, while the forestry code prevents the exploitation of forests for commercial gain. Both laws are considered progressive and Ivoirian NGOs have been involved in their design and execution. Two recent cases show that enactment of progressive laws is, however, not enough to protect natural resources; it also requires that the government equitably enforce the laws.

- After designating a major forest in the north of the country a classified and hence protected area, the government then turned around and permitted the construction of a road through it. While the CSO, *Croix Verte*-CI, was successful in eventually overturning this decision, it engendered significant conflict between social, economic and political interests throughout the country.
- Because of growing pressure on limited farm land, villagers in and surrounding another classified forest began cultivating cocoa and cutting trees for wood. When it came to enforcing the laws prohibiting these activities, however, government was unwilling to

take legal action for political reasons. The unwillingness of government to enforce a law in one area calls into question its ability to enforce a law in other areas thus undermining the legitimacy of both itself and the rule of law in general.

5. Divergent Societal Interests: Broken Promises

A society is made up of multiple and competing interests. It is the role of the state to arbitrate these interests, keeping in mind the overall public good. Some interests, however, are so intimately tied to a country's self-perception that they become part of the underlying agreement that binds the government and its people. In recent years, the Ivoirian government has been unable to maintain one of its most fundamental covenants. The following discussion notes how the breach of this trust has led to ongoing conflict and exacerbated other tensions already present in the country. It also reinforces similar findings that CSOs have little capacity to resolve such fundamental conflicts when consensus on political life is itself called into question.

One of the cornerstones underlying the understanding between the Ivoirian state and its people — particularly its teachers, students and their parents — was the importance of education. A related understanding involves the prospects that students and their parents have for good jobs for graduates. A combination of factors including declining prices of cocoa and coffee, coupled with poor economic policy, rapid population growth and the oil price shocks of the 1980s, led to unsustainable external debt. This in turn affected the government's ability to maintain the level of subsidy to education at all levels. As a result, this recurring conflict became a defining feature of relations between government and students from the late 1980s to the present.

The crisis was exacerbated as opposition political parties used students and teachers, as well as their unions, to place pressure on the ruling party to give up power. The ruling party responded by mobilizing its own student and teacher groups to counter the opposition leading in many cases to violent conflict.

While the conflict remained relatively peaceful through the early 1990s, the Catholic Church was able to undertake effective mediation between the student/teacher alliance and the government. Over time, as the conflict heightened, the church's ability to perform this public function declined. Eventually a broader coalition of CSOs including parent associations, human rights groups and women's organizations was formed to perform this mediation role. In 1998, the expanded church effort, called "*le forum des confessions religieuses*," merged with these other CSOs to constitute the "*le Collectif pour l'école*." The collective, however, was no more successful in mediating the conflict than the Catholic Church had been. The reasons for this failure include the fact that the collective was always reactive. It never developed a strategy of its own either for addressing the crisis or its underlying causes. In particular, the collective lacked the analytic capacity to understand the political character of this dispute and then to attempt to deal with it. In fact, the educational crisis was a manifestation of a much larger societal problem — the lack of consensus among the political elite concerning the rules governing political contestation. Of course, students and teachers had real grievances concerning the ability of the Ivoirian government to provide quality education, but the underlying battle was between political forces trying to accede to power.

6. Natural Resources: Going Cross-Border/Traditional versus Modern Rules

This study reveals that a majority of the conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire have resulted from multiple claims for access to and use of natural resources. Claims over the ownership of rich farmland in the southwest (and west) highlight a number of dimensions to the natural resource category of conflict. The action ultimately setting off this conflict was the sale of land by tribal elders during the 1970s to outsiders — Ivoirians primarily from the north, and from neighboring countries, notably Burkina Faso and Mali. Ultimately, this led to some of the severest "non-political" violence seen in the modern history of Côte d'Ivoire.

This struggle for land became a cross-border conflict when the Malians and Burkinabés, who came to Côte d'Ivoire as laborers to work on the cocoa plantations, were given land and settled in the cocoa belt, and were eventually forced to flee the country for their lives. They were targeted in particular by young people in the southwest who saw them as usurpers of their traditional lands. These conflicts often have involved the use of violence designed to force the "outsiders" to leave.

This conflict also had two additional dimensions as an ethno-regional conflict between people from the north and those in the southwest, and as a conflict between customary versus modern values and laws regulating the rights to use land. The latter dimension was expressed as a conflict over the validity of modern contracts through which land had been sold to northerners. This right was contested by those who argued that only customary rules for allocating and managing land were legitimate. They asserted that when traditional leaders allocated land to the emigrating northern ethnic groups, the Malians and Burkinabé settlers, that they had violated customary law and practice in which land is collectively vested in the community and ownership is not recognized as a right of individuals.

The broader arena of political conflict manifest in the elections of 1995 and 2000 was in large measure about the ownership of land, particularly the rich farming lands of the southwest. Youth from the southwest who found themselves without work after completing their studies saw cocoa farming as their only means of livelihood. Land was not available to them, however, because it had been sold or given away by their elders. Their response was to reclaim it through violence. It can also be seen as a generational clash between unemployed youth and their elders.

However sophisticated the conflict methodologies that Ivoirian CSOs may possess, they are unlikely to have the ability to solve this conflict. The problem is primarily political, involving which body of law will be recognized as authoritative in allocating the principal natural resource (land) of Côte d'Ivoire. The conflict was, in fact, exacerbated by politicians at all levels, who used it as a means for gaining or maintaining political power and for deflecting criticism for their own failure to promote sound economic policy leading to adequate employment and income generation for the youth of the country.

7. Traditional versus Modern Authority in Conflict Prevention and Management

For most of the post-colonial era, the modern Ivoirian state has been the primary arbitrator of social conflict. It has not just been a matter of the exclusion of civil society from participation in public matters but of the marginalization of traditional authorities as well. This study found that

traditional authorities, with the assistance of CSOs, in fact fill the vacuum left by the ineffective attempts of government to resolve conflict, often centered around the use of natural resources. A good example is a conflict that erupted in the north between nomadic (transhumance) cattle herders from Mali and sedentary Ivoirian farmers.

The usual recourse to the concerned local representative of the national administration, the *sous prefet*, had proven ineffective and thus could not prevent or manage conflict. One of the reasons for its ineffectiveness was the perception that these local administrative representatives were corrupt and that they frequently harassed cattle herders simply to gain illegal fees.

As a consequence of this ineffectiveness, Ivoirian NGOs worked with traditional authorities to strengthen their capacity deal with conflict, a function that had once been one of their major responsibilities. To succeed, however, administrative authorities needed to recognize the legitimacy of these traditional authorities to perform this function. They needed to encourage the concerned parties in the conflict to address themselves to traditional authorities rather than to the *sous-prefets*. When they did so, a whole set of conflicts that had previously been immune to resolution and had become increasingly violent now could be addressed in a more sustainable manner built on traditional values and practices. This proved to be one of the major lessons learned from this study.

C. Principal Conclusions

Conflict prevention and management interventions should avoid creating more conflict. This is a very important tenant of USAID conflict resolution program and interventions that this study found was shared by many CSOs. Democratic empowerment, however, means that marginalized groups or groups that previously have had no power begin demanding that their voices be heard, and that their interests and rights be taken into consideration and respected. Thus, in order to achieve policy change and reform in political systems of unequal power the heightening of overt conflict is often necessary. This fact poses a challenge to the goals of external donors like USAID that simultaneously want to promote sustainable development and lower or remove conflict. Supporting our conclusion is the perspective of one Malian CSO, AADeC, that argues that conflict is a natural outgrowth of different interests competing for public resources and should not, therefore, be prevented. Conflict is to be expected and even welcomed, but it must be managed. As the experience of AADeC illustrates, one of the most effective ways to manage conflict is to do so in the process of promoting development, whether in the process of planning, implementing or monitoring.

Côte d'Ivoire, until the mid-1990s, was an oasis of stability in West Africa, if not of democracy. Social peace, however, was largely the result of a single party and a respected leader dominating political life. Stability was maintained because political opposition was both strongly discouraged, and because the economy was able to meet the needs the majority of the population. As the economy deteriorated during the 1980s and with the death of founding president at the beginning of the 1990s, stability gave way to fundamental cleavages in social and political life. The principal difference between Côte d'Ivoire and Mali is that the latter was able to forge consensus among all societal interests concerning the basic make up of the political system and the way power would be contested. In Mali, the widespread agreement on the basic values of

tolerance and inclusion served to dampen down the use of social and economic tensions resulting from poor economic performance as part of the strategy of contesting for power. The same was not true in Côte d'Ivoire, however. As a result, many such tensions have been politicized with devastating consequences for conflict and its management. Politicization of conflict makes it far more difficult for civil society to play a significant role in this area.

VI. CSO Capacity Assessment

Each of the following three sections provides an analysis of individual CSO capacity following the assessment tool developed for this study. The final conclusion section summarizes the state of CSOs in conflict prevention work in the country and draws conclusions about the potential to expand CSO work in this area in the near and mid-term.

A. Internal Democratic Governance

Our analysis of CSO internal governance practices was designed to address two issues:

- *the strengths and weaknesses of CSOs in terms of their internal organization and functioning; and*
- *the degree to which women are integrated into the structure and function of these CSO in meaningful ways.*

In general, the effectiveness of a CSO is a function of the degree to which its internal structure and processes promote: (a) democratic practice, i.e., broad-based participation in the making and implementation organizational decisions; and (b) good governance outcomes, i.e., transparency in the selection of decisions and leaders, and the accountability and responsiveness of leaders to their members.

1. Principal Findings in Mali

Our interview with CSOs — primary, intermediary and tertiary — led to the following findings:

- All the CSOs interviewed except *the Plateforme Paysanne* were officially registered with a concerned GOM ministry, primarily the Ministry of Justice under the 1959 Law of Association. This indicates that all CSOs have legal standing and are thus able to participate in public actions, including conflict prevention and management. Registration also means that CSOs have constitutions or by-laws that define organizational structure as well as rules by which the organizations function internally. It should be noted, however, that most of these by-laws come from a standardized template provided by the government, rather than through a great deal of thought or debate within the CSOs over their internal rules and structures.
- All CSOs interviewed were formed voluntarily. Voluntary affiliation in organizations means that members are more likely to participate in the full range of its activities, including contributions of their time and money. Having said this, many CBOs based on residential affiliation really do not have a much room for not joining the associations given the pressure for conformity found at the local level.
- Both women's organizations (CAFO and *Mouvement des Femme*) and primary-level associations (*Fédération des Pêcheurs et Cobas*) are less likely to demonstrate broad-

based participation in internal governance matters than intermediary CSOs.[4] There is some evidence that traditional associations are more likely to exhibit centralized decision making and to exclude women from these processes.

- The great majority of CSOs, whatever their category, marginalize the role of women in organizational decision making. This was particularly evident in the CBOs interviewed. If women are represented on the governing boards of these organizations, they tend to hold marginal positions (e.g., assistant treasurers, assistant vice presidents). One result of this fact is that women often prefer to form their own organizations, or to create separate branches within existing groups rather than to participate in mixed gender associations.
- Federated bodies (e.g., *Syndicat des Producteurs de Coton et Culture Vivrières* [SYCOV] and *Platforme Paysanne*) are often imposed from the top-down rather than organically growing from the bottom-up. This lack of voluntary association has often led to internal conflict over selection of leaders and the nature of the decisions made. As a result, the legitimacy of the organization vis-à-vis both its members and the external environment has been impacted and these tensions have been politicized with devastating consequences for peace and conflict management.
- Consensus, rather than voting is the preferred instrument for selecting leaders and taking decisions in most CSOs, and particularly in CBOs. This includes decisions taken both in daily matters and in annual general assemblies. This is not surprising nor is it necessarily detrimental to the practice of democratic governance. Malian society, in general, has practiced consensus decision making and leadership selection for centuries with generally good results. When associations group people beyond the primary or face-to-face level, however, these preferences become more problematic.
- Women's associations, when allowed to become involved in conflict resolution, make extensive use of personal contacts with protagonists and demonstrate an ability to facilitate dialogue between them in ways that men could not achieve.[5] The problem for women has been the lack of ability to break out of the traditional roles accorded to them and take on news ones. This in itself has been a major source of social conflict.

2. Principal Findings in Côte d'Ivoire

- Most primary-level CSOs (associations of hunters and traditional authorities being the exception) are registered with concerned government organs. This is facilitated by their ability to register at the subnational level with representatives of local ministries or with local governments.
- Most CSOs have constitutions and by-laws largely because these are requirements of the formal registration process. Many CSOs interviewed, however, reported a gap between the structures specified in their constitutions and those actually in place and functioning.

[4] Our findings on this point are suggestive and not based on statistical significance.

[5] Based on a significant number of cases of major societal conflict in which Malian women's organizations were involved, from a wide range of women's groups during the revolution in 1991 to MNFSPUN's participation in mediating the northern rebellion and CAFO's role in cooling tempers in the ongoing school crises.

- All CSOs have been formed voluntarily. This includes primary-level CBOs as well as intermediaries and specialized support organizations. The case studies collected for this study reveal that many primary CSOs have been formed to fulfill a real need, often to serve the specific interests of their members and to serve as the guardians of traditional values and practices. This is the case, for example of the associations of hunters (*Dozo*), traditional authorities and *griots*, who can play a major role in the prevention and management of conflict in traditional and informal settings.
- Primary-level associations demonstrate far fewer of the characteristics of "internal democratic governance" than CSOs at the intermediary and tertiary levels. This is well documented in the "Consolidated CSO Capacity Building Table" found in Annex 2 of this report.
- Most CSOs have few if any permanent staff. As a result, day-to-day decision making is usually made by a small group of leaders, whether in the executive body or among the governing board.
- Women are active in all of the governing bodies of the intermediary and tertiary CSOs studied in Côte d'Ivoire. This is in marked contrast to our findings for Mali, where women are relegated to lesser posts on the governing boards.
- The intellectual capacity and sophistication of Ivoirian CSO personnel is extremely impressive. Members of intermediary and tertiary CSOs are much more likely to be literate, a principal indicator for participation, than is the case for Mali. Whatever limitations CSOs confront in their efforts to be effective in Cote Ivoire, knowledge or analytic capabilities are not to blame.
- In general, consensus, rather than voting prevailed as the preferred instrument employed by most CBOs when it came both to decision making and leadership selection. In Côte d'Ivoire, however, there is a far lower level of member participation than was found in Mali. In many intermediary and specialized associations, for example, major organizational decisions tend to be made by a narrow group of founding board members, rather than by the overall membership. It is not clear whether this observation stems from the structural factor that Ivoirian CSOs are much less likely than their Malian counterparts to have permanent executive bodies, or whether it is a reflection of the underlying difficulty of finding consensus in Ivoirian society as a whole.

3. Principal Conclusions

There are a number of forces that have worked both for and against internal CSO democratic governance practice. It should not be surprising that the same tendencies towards centralization, hierarchical decision making and marginalization of women in public life that are the norm in Malian society in general should be exhibited in CSOs in particular. At the same time, this is hardly a static situation. Malian values of tolerance, consensus, and the habit of association are all strong countercurrents to the less democratic practices that we have observed. In addition, Malian democracy has had a significant impact in terms of reinforcing and promoting such practices as societal participation in decision making, good governance (transparency, accountability, anti-corruption), women's rights and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Finally, the promotion of internal democratic practices has been encouraged in many donor programs, not the

least of which has been USAID/Mali's democracy and governance program. In fact, the great majority of CSOs interviewed for this study had participated directly or indirectly in this program with a generally positive appreciation by the participants.

Drawing firm conclusions on the internal governance of CSOs in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire based on the fairly small number of associations investigated is risky. Nonetheless, this study did discover that Ivoirian CSOs demonstrate lower levels of democratic practice in their internal governance than those in Mali. A number of factors appear to be at play:

- The broader macro-political environment seems to be significant. Highly conflictual and politicized macro environments seem to be less conducive to supporting internally democratic CSOs.
- The degree to which CSOs benefit from the support of international NGOs or international donors may be relevant. When there is more support not only are African CSOs likely to receive help specifically on capacity building, but they are often required to demonstrate democracy and good.

B. Sound and Effective Internal Management

The establishment of internal democratic governance practices provides the rules and institutional framework for sound and effective management, it does not ensure it. A range of skills, experience, systems and procedures are required to ensure good planning, the mobilization and effective utilization of resources, and the assessment of organizational performance and program impact. All of these can help organizations achieve their objectives and results. This study focused on two questions in examining the internal management of CSOs:

- Do the CSOs have skills, systems and procedures that should assist them in being effective, i.e., in achieving their organizational objectives and results? We posited that a specific range of skills relevant to ensuring good planning, the mobilization and effective utilization of resources, and the assessment of organizational performance and program impact should contribute to effectiveness.
- What are the sources of financial support available to the CSOs, particularly for any conflict prevention and mitigation activities that they have conducted or plan to conduct?

1. Principal Findings in Mali

- The CSOs interviewed devote considerable effort and attention to ensuring a certain degree of transparency in the development of action plans and budgets as well as in the management of and reporting on their finances. This can largely be explained by the significant training received by CSOs including many CBOs, in these and other management areas made possible by donor funding.
- Many other important areas of internal management were less positive from the point of view developing internal accountability. Strategic planning is rarely undertaken. Audits are rarely conducted. Few associations have clear divisions of organizational responsibilities, and few make systematic use of monitoring and evaluation as tools for

improving management performance and program impact. Only a few CSOs have been able to provide their staff with recent training, either in technical areas or in management skills.

- Most CSOs lack even a minimum amount of organizational infrastructure, including offices, equipment and transport. This was particularly true for CBOs and intermediary federated bodies.
- Few organizations are building up a core cadre of competent staff capable of managing programs over the long-term, since most, again most noticeable among the CBOs and federated bodies, depend largely volunteer staff.

2. Principal Findings in Côte d'Ivoire

- Ivoirian CSOs demonstrated considerable weakness in the area of basic management skills, as is demonstrated in the "Consolidated Capacity Building Table" in Annex 2. While most of CSOs undertook basic accounting functions and reported on the use of their funds, particularly for donors, few actually had any type of broader financial management system in place. Only four of 15 CSOs reported an external audit of their yearly financial situations.
- All of the intermediary and tertiary CSOs interviewed lacked a long-term strategy capable of guiding their planning and goal setting processes. Most of these CSOs argued that since resources were in such short supply, it did not make sense to plan beyond the next project or what was immediately available.
- Most CSOs lack even a minimum amount of organizational infrastructure, including offices, equipment and transport. This was particularly true for CBOs and federated bodies, but in contrast to Mali, it was even apparent among specialized NGOs in Côte d'Ivoire. CSOs across all three levels lack office and meeting space, have inadequate equipment including vehicles, and cannot maintain a permanent executive office with full-time staff. They are therefore dependent almost entirely on the volunteer labor of their members.
- CSOs in Côte d'Ivoire place little emphasis on such basic management requirements as written job descriptions or an organizational structure and responsibilities. They lack monitoring and evaluation systems or tools, and they show little evidence of having provided recent training, either technical or management, to their staff.

3. Principal Conclusions

These findings are not surprising, despite the significant amount of capacity-building support that Malian CSOs have been provided over the past several years. Compared to CSO communities in other countries in the subregion, notable Côte d'Ivoire, the performance of Malian CSOs appears relatively good.

In the initial start-up of any organization, volunteer labor is to be expected and promoted. Effectiveness, viewed as a function of an ongoing or sustainable capacity to produce well-defined results, however, takes a well-trained, permanent staff, with the basic tools to do their

jobs. This takes not only money, but also a stable source of funds over at least a three-to-five year period. It will be some time before Malian CSOs are able to accomplish this task and break their dependence on the uncertain nature of donor funding.

Overall, the situation of CSOs in Mali is positive. The norms and practices of effective management are well known within the CSO community, including hundreds of CBOs that have received donor assistance and particularly that from USAID/Mali. As CSOs become more sophisticated and as the economy improves, more stable sources of funding are likely to be generated internally rather than coming from external sources.

The majority of Ivoirian CSOs lacks much of the organizational infrastructure and management systems, procedures and skills associated with effective associations. The comparison with Malian CSOs is significant. This difference can be explained by three factors: (a) the relative youth and size of civil society in Côte d'Ivoire compared to Mali and to many other countries in the subregion, (b) the lack of external funding available to CSOs, and (c) the fact that few international NGOs have played the role of mentor of their Ivoirian counterparts as happened in Mali.

Ivoirian CSOs are also far less proactive than their Malian counterparts in exploring funding alternatives or in trying to imagine what they could accomplish with the resources that are available to them. Their lack of strategic vision programmatic planning forces them to remain in a reactive mode that limits their ability to obtain such funding.

It is also probably true that since Côte d'Ivoire was viewed by the international community as having a relatively better economic situation than its neighbors, donors did not target it for as much assistance. It was only with the troubles of the 1990s that CSOs became a more prominent force in Ivoirian development.

C. Civic Action: Conflict Prevention and Management

The underlying premise of our assessment methodology is that to be effective in conflict work CSOs must first be internally sound in both their governance arrangements and in the management of their organizations. While CSOs have demonstrated the ability to engage in conflict management and prevention and to succeed in many cases, a sustainable capacity first requires a sound and democratic institutional platform.

This section examines the scope of past and current activities involving conflict prevention and mitigation locally, nationally and regionally; the capacities of these CSO to communicate with other CSOs working on conflict issues, and to form networks and coalitions for the purposes of advocacy, mediation and other activities that may be relevant to affecting conflict. It also addresses capacities of CSOs to communicate with authorities at various levels of government (local, national, regional) and to advocate their views and be involved in policy processes.

1. Principal Findings in Mali

- All the CSOs interviewed, except UNTRM, stated that they had skills in conflict prevention and management even though only three of them (Jam Sahel, *Association pour l'Appui au Développement Global* [ADG], GDRN5) had any formal training in this area. Three explanations exist for this surprising finding. First, each and every CSO had participated in some form of conflict resolution, thus the logic went that they had done it then obviously they must have had some capacity to do it. Malians have a saying for this mentality that goes "*you become a blacksmith by working at the forge."* Second, the great majority of these CSOs, including CBOs, had benefited from training in civic action that included skills development in advocacy. Finally, many of the skills, strategies and techniques involved in conflict resolution are second nature to most associations in Mali. As a result of these factors, CSOs had indeed acquired skill or experience in mediation and negotiation. They use a variety of bonds such as those linking clans, ethnic and age grades. They make use of social and cultural dialogue in conflictual situations. They also use traditional authorities like chiefs, *fetisheurs* and *griots*, religious leaders (*imams*), and women who are not directly involved in the conflict as mediators.
- Seventy-five percent of the intermediary CSOs interviewed stated that CBOs were the most directly concerned parties in the majority of conflicts, whether they were local, national or even cross-border, and were thus best placed to prevent, manage or resolve them.
- The principal mandate of virtually all of these CSOs was in assisting their members or client communities to improve some aspect of their social and economic welfare. Few had any previous experience in conflict resolution or the related area of policy advocacy. In short, each CSO became involved in conflict resolution as a result of its normal development work.
- Few CSOs were involved in conflict prevention or management efforts at the cross-border level. As discussed in greater detail in Section V, most conflicts are local and revolved around access to or use of natural resources. The second most frequent type of conflict was national in nature and was likely to involve some aspect of decentralization.
- Malian CSOs have had considerable experience in what we broadly call "civic action," — engaging government at all levels in dealing with interests of concern to their members or the broader communities in which they live and work. There are numerous examples of CSOs that have undertaken policy advocacy vis-à-vis government and particularly local communal governments, often with success. The character of the dialogue between CSOs and their government counterparts has, in general, been civil and productive even when CSOs did not fully achieve their aims.
- Most (over 90 percent) of CSOs working on conflict in some way are highly dependent on external financing for all of their civic action and conflict resolution activities. Under Malian law they are not permitted to engage in income generating activities and are unlikely to be able to generate much income from member dues and contributions. It is clear that without international donor and NGO support (financial) and even direction, it is unlikely that many of these CSOs could become involved in conflict resolution efforts. Our case study on child trafficking illustrates this point well.

- New models for how civil society can be supported in undertaking democracy and governance work in general and conflict management/advocacy in particular are emerging that were not previously planned or foreseen. The case study on Djenne Dam Conflict (*le Seuil de Talo)* presented in Annex 4 is rich in lessons about what can happen when international NGOs are able to help build the capacity of local CBOs, who in turn form federations with no clear intention that this capability be directed at conflict resolution. A critical element in this model appears to be not only the context of decentralization but the creation of mechanism for intergovernmental negotiation.

Some Examples from Mali of CSO Conflict Resolution Strategies

- Forming "conciliation commissions" is one of the principal strategies effectively employed by Malian CSOs (as noted in several of the attached case studies and anecdotes). These commissions include all parties to the conflict and serve as the institutional platform through which mediation can take place. Example: *Association Malienne des Droits de l'Homme's* (AMDH) use of a summary of the mediation (process verbal) which then served as a kind of binding between the concerned parties reflecting agreements that have been reached.
- Use of an extensive network of women's groups to help depoliticize the situation. Example: The case of CAFO's mediation of student–government conflicts, in which the women's groups got the political parties to agree to stop recruiting student groups into their parties and got parents to support this practice so that all issues between students and government would not have to become partisan affairs.
- Forging networks of CSOs at the national and subregional level as a means of exchanging information, developing joint strategies, and gaining more influence through group solidarity.
- Working with appropriate authorities to obtain information for their members that would help them avoid unnecessary conflict with officials. Example: *Coopérative de Commercialisation de Bétails et d'Approvisionnement de l'Abattoir de Sikasso's* (COBAS) strategy of getting information on border crossing laws and regulations (national and subregional) and on cattle herders' rights to obtain a "*laissez passer*" from the Malian Ministry of Rural Development.
- The use of organizational legitimacy as a producer group to counter the power of governmental or quasi-governmental organizations. Example: The *Plateform Paysanne,* in its efforts to represent interests of cotton growers vis-à-vis the parastatal cotton processing organization, the CMDT.
- The use of traditional values and practices of conflict resolution to overcome historical blockages in communication and willingness to negotiate between adversarial parties. Example: the *Plateform Paysanne* evoking traditional conflict resolution practices in dealing with the CMDT.

2. Principal Findings in Côte d'Ivoire

- Ivoirian CSOs are weak in most skills including the area of conflict prevention and management:
  - The level of knowledge or understanding of the decision-making process among Ivoirian CSOs is not high. Only 9 of 15 CSOs said they understood where the principal areas of decision making took place, thus providing them with a means for targeting their advocacy activities.
  - Their perception is that most (11 of 15) think that they have the capacity to develop and put into place an advocacy strategy.

- About half (7 of 15) believe that they have the capacity to analyze the external environment sufficiently to mount an advocacy campaign.
- About half (7 of 15) had actually undertaken advocacy either alone or as a member of a coalition.

- Capacity in policy research, analysis, formulation and lobbying as well as the ability to forge coalitions and alliances is very limited among Ivoirian CSOs. Since these skills are required for conflict prevention and management, this limits their capacity for this work.
- Actual experience with developing a conflict management strategy is also very limited. Only one-third (5 of 15) of the CSOs felt they could actually formulate and execute conflict management strategy.
- Despite the fact most Ivoirian CSOs claim that they have had some capacity to analyze the origins of conflict, their skills in mediation and negotiations and the level of training of CSOs in conflict prevention and management is again, very low. Only two CSOs, AID-CI and *Notre Nation*, reported having had any formal training in these areas. Since the majority of the CSOs also had no formal training in advocacy, they lacked the parallel skills that would have helped them even without formal conflict training.
- Despite these findings, many Ivoirian CSOs actually engage in conflict work. Fully three-quarters reported that they had some experience in this area that provided them with on-the-job training and opportunities to learn from their experience and mistakes.
- Most involvement of Ivoirian CSOs is in conflicts that take place at the national or even cross-border level. This is in sharp contrast to the Malian experience, where local issues constitute the bulk of the conflict mitigation work. This may be because the majority of conflicts noted in Côte d'Ivoire had involved national political disputes at their core, and because decentralization is much less advanced in Côte d'Ivoire than in Mali.
- Ivoirian CSOs are much more likely than their Malian counterparts to be involved in political issues, like human rights abuses, labor rights, press freedom and judicial reform. They are less likely to be involved in the more traditional areas of conflict relating to the social and economic situation.
- Few CSOs are involved in conflict prevention or management efforts at the cross-border level. This is not because cross-border conflict was absent but rather that CSOs were either not well placed to deal with them or did not see it in their interest to do so.
- Ivoirian CSOs are less likely to be involved in successful coalitions or networks. There have been efforts to do so but they have met with limited success because of the internal divisions, often along partisan line, within Ivoirian civil society.
- CSOs in Côte d'Ivoire are, ironically, given their general weakness, more likely to have a relationship with government agencies than their Malian counterparts. Côte d'Ivoire has a long history of establishing formal consultations, the most recent of which is the National Reconciliation Forum. Consultation, however, has usually been more about co-optation and pie-sharing than about opening up real participation in policy determination or implementation.

3. Principal Conclusions

- Malian CSOs have demonstrated a surprisingly good capacity for conflict management and prevention, albeit on an ad hoc basis. As noted above, this is due to a range of factors, not the least of which has been the support of USAID/Mali and other donors in building both internal capacity as well as focusing on developing CSO advocacy skills, many of which have a direct bearing on conflict resolution capacity. We conclude, however, that Malian CSOs have yet to demonstrate much effectiveness in undertaking cross-border conflict prevention and management efforts.
- One of the principal obstacles to effective CSO cross-border conflict resolution efforts is the historical preoccupation of the African state with sovereignty and the maintenance of fragile borders. This is a constraint to the role that non-state actors, including CSOs, can play in conflict resolution beyond their own national frontiers. The fact that thus far intergovernmental mechanisms like ECOWAS's Conflict Monitoring Mechanism (ECOWATCH) and *Programme de Coordination et d'Assistance pour la Sécurité et le Développement's* (PCASED) civil society program for controlled and reducing small arms trafficking are so weak, further limits the opportunities for national CSOs to be constructively involved with these international government organizations in conflict resolution work.
- Nonetheless, a number of CSOs have had some success in these types of conflicts as a number of our case studies demonstrate. Specifically, we are beginning to see the construction of cross-border CSO networks and alliances that include some national-level CSOs such as the "*Réseau des Femmes Africaines pour la Paix*," and international and local NGOs in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire working in the area of child trafficking. A number of these networks and federations, while working in more traditional development endeavors, have the potential to play an expanded role in cross-border conflicts with donor support. A good example in this regard, is the *Plateforme Paysanne*, supported by CILSS, which has counterparts in many other Sahelian countries.
- A number of intermediary CSOs, both NGOs and federated bodies, have had considerable success in the prevention and management of national and local-level conflicts (e.g., ADG, Jam Sahel, GDRN5 and INAGEF), and have the potential to become involved in cross-border issues with additional donor support.
- While CBOs lack permanent organizational capacity and technical competence for sustained conflict resolution involvement, they do possess and have exhibited a local knowledge that can be built on as they are strengthened to undertake more traditional development tasks. This is particularly important, as the local level seems to be the locus where most conflicts develop and which will only be reinforced by the effect that decentralization has and will continue to provoke for many years to come.
- Ivoirian CSOs are not likely to become effective actors in conflict mitigation or peace building anytime soon, particularly without significant outside support. This study shows that there is no inherent reason or overwhelming internal motivations for this to happen. Thus far, however, Ivoirian CSOs lack capacity in all three dimensions examined above. This does not appear to be their most serious constraint however. Rather, as this assessment has repeatedly noted, the overall political, legal and institutional context is

extremely debilitating for all societal actors — not just civil society. In addition the impact of the external environment on CSOs has been unfavorable. As CSOs have become ever more partisan they have lost their neutrality and much of their potential in public matters in general and conflict resolution in particular.

VII. The Role of Nigerian and Ghanian CSOs in Regional Conflicts: Linkages and Actions

What role can and do West African CSOs play in dealing with conflict across national frontiers and in the region? This issue is addressed more fully in a brief synthesis paper that summarizes the findings from all of our studies (the desk study, the two conflict case studies and the two assessments). Here, we will treat only the aspects that emerge from the field work conducted for the Anglophone CSO Assessment.

The field studies summarized here have demonstrated without any question that there is a considerable capacity for becoming involved in conflict prevention and management work in the countries surveyed, although this seems to be better developed and operating in a more favorable environment in Mali today than is the case for Côte d'Ivoire.

At the same time, in the Francophone countries studies, generally CSOs have yet to demonstrate much effectiveness in undertaking cross-border conflict prevention and management efforts. One of the principal obstacles to effective CSO cross-border conflict resolution efforts is the historical preoccupation of the African state with sovereignty and the maintenance of fragile borders. This is a constraint to the role that non-state actors, including CSOs can play in conflict resolution beyond their own national frontiers. For Côte d'Ivoire, the very weakness of CSOs in advocacy and conflict prevention/resolution work means that it is unlikely that they are well prepared to enter into the more difficult arena of conflict that involves a subregional, or that spill across borders.

Nonetheless, as the case studies (Annex 4) demonstrate, a number of CSOs have had some success in these types of conflicts. The most important of these to date are the CSOs that work through regional networks, or that are themselves affiliated with a parent NGO that has a regional or Africa-wide focus.

First, there are the national CSOs that forge linkages out of a common need to address a problem. Among these are the "*Réseau des Femmes Africaines pour la Paix*," and earlier the *Mouvement national des femmes pour la sauvegarde de la Paix et de la culture nationale* (MNFPUN) that together with other women's peace organizations helped bring about a resolution of the violent conflict in northern Mali and have tried to play a role in violent conflicts elsewhere in the region. Similarly, the networks of national CSOs (including a Malian affiliate) that have been promoted by the CILSS, and notably farmer organizations in the *Plateforme Paysanne,* might well be able to play a similar role in conflicts over land and natural resources, and have in fact received some training in this area.

Second, there are CSOs that have been able to affiliate with a program of a regional CSOs, such as has been the case of the Ivoirian CSO *Club de l'Union Africain* (CUA), which is linked to and supported by the West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP). Through this support, CUA has been able to help address issues of student violence in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

Then, there are CSOs that are part of a broader organization that has a regional conflict resolution agenda in some specific area. This is the case for GERDDES-CI for example, that is able to drawn some strength from GERDDES as a regional organization to deal with electoral and more generally political disputes. In the case of the African Center for Human Security (ACHS), this group that has branches in Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso was well as in Côte d'Ivoire, and is able, through the support of its sister CSOs, to become involved in issues that cross the Ivoirian border, such as the political crisis in Togo, or the regional issue of small arms trafficking and anti-personnel mine proliferation. Other CSOs that are part of Africa-wide networks, such as Africare-CI also have the potential to activate these linkages to deal with regional conflicts.

In addition, there are CSOs that certainly do not see themselves as essential conflict prevention/management organizations or even international actors at all, but nonetheless become involved in cross-border conflicts because of their concern for development or the environment. One such organization is the Ivoirian CSO, *Croix Verte* that has become involved in tension around the movement of cattle across the Ivoirian-Bukinabé border. *Plateforme Paysanne* associations also do not see themselves as working on conflict mitigation per se, only to the extent of disputes in the rural economy between competitors for the same land, or between farmers and herders, for example, which can produce international tensions as well as localized disputes and potential for violence. There is a considerable need to assist associations of this type in their role of peace building as well as development.

The issue of crime and violence associated with the proliferation of small arms in West Africa is another potential focal point for West African regional CSO cooperation. At least one of the CSOs surveyed in these assessments has become involved in trying to reinforce the Small Arms Moratorium (ACHS). The key question for such CSOs is how they are going to be connected to ECOWATCH, the zonal observatories for ECOWATCH, and the UN-sponsored PCASED on the one hand and to the national commissions on the Moratorium on the other. Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence on this for the moment. The ECOWAS mechanisms have barely begun functioning. There is clearly potential here for some CSOs to get involved in these security matters as the ECOWAS and PCASED mechanisms unfold. This will be contingent, however, on the willingness of West African states to welcome the participation of truly autonomous civil society associations in an area that has always been conceived of as a national central government prerogative.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 West Africa Regional CSO Assessment Study: CSO Capacity Building Assessment Tool: Questionnaire and Guide

[See separate file.]

Annex 2 Consolidated Country Tables for Mali and Côte d'Ivoire

CONSOLIDATED CSO CAPACITY BUILDING ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE: MALI																															
CSO Name	CSO Type			Enabling Environment		Internal Democratic Governance								Sound and Effective Internal Management										Civic Action							
																								Advocacy				Conflict			
	P	I	T	Policy	Instit'l	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
ADG		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
J.SAHEL		Y		F		Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
INAGEF			Y	F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CAFO		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
S.GUMO		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
FEMME PAIX		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-
MVT FEMME		Y		F		Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AMDH		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ASERNI		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y						Y	Y				Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	
GDRN5			Y	F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AEDEM		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PECHEURS	Y			F		Y	Y	-	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PAYSAN		Y		F		Y	N	Y	Y	-	-			-	-		Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AADeC		Y		F/U		Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y		Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y
COBAS	Y			F/U		Y	Y	Y	Y	-	-	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
ADOC		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AMAPROS		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
GRAD		Y		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ADAC		Y		F/U		Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
UNCTRM		Y		F/U		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	-	-	Y	Y	-		-	Y	Y	-
Totals	2	16	2	20		20	19	17	16	16	16	16	17	14	13	18	15	17	17	17	13	18	14	20	20	19	19	19	19	19	18

CONSOLIDATED CSO CAPACITY BUILDING ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE: CÔTE D'IVOIRE																															
CSO Name	CSO Type			Enabling Environment		Internal Democratic Governance									Sound and Effective Internal Management										Civic Action							
																									Advocacy				Conflict			
	P	I	T	Pol	Inst	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Amnesty Intl			x	F	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
CoopEACy	x			U	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Cheférie Trad	x			F	U	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
DOZO (hunters)	x					Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
FOFCI (women)			x	F		Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
GERDDES			x	F		Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
MIDH (Hrights)			x	F		Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Notre Nation		x		F		Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
OLPED(press)			x			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
OIMPJ (judges)			x			Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ACHS			x	F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
CUA		x		F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
LIDH (HR)			x			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
AID-CI			x	F		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SYNARES			x	F		Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Total	3	2	10	11		15	12	12	10	8	12	9	10	7	8	8	9	6	6	12	6	2	12	8	10	7	11	8	11	11	4	9

Y= YES, N=No, NA= Not Applicable.

Annex 3 Groups Contacted

Côte d'Ivoire

Name of Association	Person Interviewed	Contact Information
Association International pour la Démocratie - Section Côte d'Ivoire (AID-CI)	Raphael Ouattara; Mlle Bakayokol	B.P. 675 Abidjan 22, CI ; Tel : 225-22488509, 05 92 19 41; cell: 07084459
Amnesty International (AI)	Mr. Zoukou	Tel : 05 89 85 89
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AFRICARE	Mr. Al-Hassana	07 88 39 04; 22 41 13 18
African Center for Human Security (ACHS)	Mr. Thomas Kignelman	Tel: 22 52 50 49; 22 52 50 49
Association des Amis des Enfants de CI (AAECI)	Mme Navigué	Tel : 22 43 32 17
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Comité de médiation	Mr. Ouraga	Tel : 05 09 94 37
Coopérative des Exploitants Agricoles Caha Ygnion (CEACY)	Mr. Coulibaly	Tel: 05 70 32 73
Croix Verte de CI	Mr Bertin	Tel : 05 99 68 20
Côte d'Ivoire 60 Ethnies	Mr. Yao	
Club de l'Union Africaine-Section CI		Tel : 07 82 62 75
Associations des Chasseurs Traditionals (Dozos)		Tel : 07 63 55 97
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Eglise Méthodiste	Pasteur Abraham	Tel : 07 04 06 58
Fédération des Organisations. Féminines de Côte d'Ivoire (FOFCI)	Mme Jouhair	Tel : 07 06 24 11 ; 05 87 75 44 ; 22 47 06 75
Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches sur la Démocratie et le Développement Economique et Social en Côte d'Ivoire (GERDDES-CI)	Mme Kapet	Tel : 22 44 63 05
La Ligue Ivoirianne des Droits de l'Homme (LIDH)	Mr. Adjoumani	Tel : 22 47 06 75
Notre Nation		Tel : 07 82 62 75
Observatoire de l'Indépendance de la Magistrature (OIMPJ)	Mr. Lago	Tel : 07 06 74 15
Réseau Ivoirian des Organisations Féminines (RIOF)	Mme Gogoua	Tel : 07 02 25 70
SAVE THE CHILDREN	Mr. Andy Brooks	Tel: 07 83 32 23
SOCODEVI	Mr. Mario 05 74 22 96	Tel :05 74 22 96
SYNARES--Syndicat National de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur	Mr. Messou	Tel : 07 97 78 72
Vision et Action des Femmes Africaines contre les Guerres (VAFAG)	Mme Dondy	Tel : 05 95 63 91
Winrock	Mme Assémian	Tel : 22 41 89 34
United States of American, Embassy	Mr. Dan Fulweiler	Tel : 20 21 09 79 ext 6570

Mali

Name of Association	Person Interviewed	Contact Information
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Plate forme Paysanne	Souleimane Massamakan Keita Diallo Mariam Sissoko	A identifier
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Association conseil pour le développement (ACOD)	Elize Sidibé Fadiala Kamissako	BP E 1864, Marché 1 de lafiabougou Tel 223- 20 30 77 Email :acod@hotmail.com
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CERDEPE	Mamadou Traore	ACI 2000 2939 75
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Association malienne pour l'environnement et la jeunesse	Moussa Sissoko	BP 9003 Zone industrielle, rue 938 porte 409 Tel 223 21 1906 Fax 223- 21 76 35 Siège djelibougou 242201
Œuvre Malienne d'aide à la femme et à l'enfant au Sahel (OMAES)	Siaka Coulibaly	BP 2692 Torokorobougou, Bamako Tel 23 67 23 (pas bon)
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Name of Association	Person Interviewed	Contact Information
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CCAONG	Mamadou sekou Toure	
CCOONG	Madi Moussa Konaté	ACI
GRAD	Goussou Mariko Idrissa Maiga	BP 5075 Niarela, Bamako Tel 223 218873 Email : grad.mali@malinet.ml
Sahel étude action développement (SEAD)		
Association de coopération et de recherche pour le développement (ACORD)	Moise Kamayé	BP 1969, Quinzanbougou, Bamako
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Annex 4 Mini-Case Studies for Mali and Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire Case Studies

CI1. LAND TENURE CONFLICT IN WESTERN CÔTE D'IVOIRE: AID-CI'S ROLE

Côte d'Ivoire is facing a complex land tenure problem whose scope is local, national, and transnational.

Once independent, Côte d'Ivoire's leaders chose agriculture as its principal means of development, with an emphasis on coffee and cocoa cultivation. As the two most productive regions of the country, Bandaman Valley, N'zi, and Comoé received most of the state's help and roads were built to facilitate the flow of goods to the port of Abidjan. As the results of overuse of the land, however, they became unproductive within a decade. The regime then began encouraging migration to the southwest and west, where forests were still hardly used. For little money, and supported by the slogan, "the land belongs to those who till it," Akan newcomers acquired huge surfaces to cultivate.

Côte d'Ivoire's prosperity attracted neighboring countries' populations (Burkina and Mali) to these plantations, and it was not uncommon that this cheap labor would receive parcels of forests as compensation after several months, at times several years, of hard and loyal service.

Starting in the 1980s, Côte d'Ivoire experienced an economic recession, which resulted in the state no longer being able to hire high school or university graduates. A new slogan then appeared, "The land never deceives, let's go back to the land!"

The descendants of those who had sold land began reclaiming it, reverting traditional land tenure rules and asserting that "the land belongs to the community" and therefore cannot be sold. Land buyers confronted them with land titles, which according to modern laws, make them the sole owners of the land. As for the non-Ivorians, they argued that barter is a legally acceptable way of forging contractual relations in traditional land tenure systems. They even detailed the conditions in which these transactions had taken place.

In 1995, in the context of the general election, the conflict escalated and became bloody. People were killed and displaced, as locals chased away outsiders. Today, most of those who were displaced have come back to most of the land that they had cultivated, while legislative authorities are seeking appropriate legal solutions.

The Côte d'Ivoire branch of the international association for democracy (*Association Internationale pour la Démocratie-Côte d'Ivoire)* has played a facilitating role in the management of this conflict. AID-CI is an NGO that specializes in the defense, protection and promotion of democracy and people. It is a member of AID-Africa. In Côte d'Ivoire, it has about eight branches that favor networking and adopts a participatory approach to conflict resolution and prevention.

AID-CI's methodology has consisted in bringing together community leaders involved in the conflict in a seminar held in August 1999. During this seminar, small mixed groups were formed, with representatives from each community included in every group. In the first phase,

participants were asked to jointly solve a "make-believe" case of conflict. The cases are then brought together in a plenary session. There are two main purposes for these make-believe cases: (i) to increase participants' capacities in terms of conflict identification and analysis and negotiation towards conflict resolution; and (ii) to slowly get participants to discuss the conflicts directly affecting them in a rational way as well as use newly acquired skills.

In a second phase, they were asked to concentrate on the conflict in which they were involved, urging them to try to apply the methods used in the preceding conflict. All small groups working together, a plenary session then brought experiences into a common platform in which an assessment (feedback) was made and lessons drawn. The objective was not so much resolving the conflicts as it was making those involved better aware of their ability to peacefully manage the conflict, in an effort to meet everybody's interest and a common benefit.

Because AID-CI is viewed as being neutral and nonpartisan, and because it clearly is professional and has real skills to teach, it has earned the trust of the population and of the administrative services of government. In this instance, participants were particularly appreciative of the opportunity to sit next to one another, to talk, and to exchange ideas. In and of itself, this to them was a success for the seminar. Partially as a result of this intervention, several measures have been taken, including new land tenure legislation introduced in the National Assembly, and proposals that outsiders be given some form of compensation to outset their loses.

CI2. THE 1995-2001 POLITICAL CONFLICT

Upon the death of its founding father, Côte d'Ivoire had to deal with the difficult succession issue. According to the constitution of that time, the National Assembly had to carry on the sick president's mandate, which was to last another two years. The National Assembly made a number of adjustments in order to ensure a smooth transition. These adjustments reinforced the president's powers without guaranteeing the transparency of the electoral process. These produced sharp reactions by opponents of the ruling party, the PDCI-RDA. The opposition rallied under the Republican Front (*Front Républicain* [FR]), determined to do all it could to ensure equitable and transparent elections in 1995. Some CSOs mobilized to support FR in its struggle for a democratic system based on fair and credible elections.

In spite of many street demonstrations and pleas, FR faced an unyielding PDCI in power. The conflict erupted the day before the 1995 presidential election, with the FR claiming that the election was rigged and refusing to go to the booths until transparency, equity and justice rules were respected. This put the country in a stalemate.

Faced with this hurdle, GERDDES-CI decided, together with AID-CI, to form a *Collectif de la Société Civile* to mediate the conflict, using neutrality as the primary recruiting criterion for joining this body.

Several human rights and democracy advocacy NGOs were involved along with the main religious leaders of Côte d'Ivoire. As soon as negotiations started, however, the unions joined the *Collectif*, thereby compromising the coalition's neutral image. A few years earlier, these unions had militated for a constitutional change to multipartyism, thereby pitting them squarely against

the PDCI. GERDDES's leadership itself was then contested, and the unions ended up taking the lead. Negotiations failed, and the FR requested that its members stay away from voting and to prevent others from going to the booths. The government then repressed this boycott with violence.

The issue of a consensual electoral code guaranteeing free and transparent elections was never resolved. Subsequently, a military coup took place on December 24, 1999. Ivorians started developing a new electoral code and a new constitution, and once again, a section of the political class decided that the conditions for loyal and democratic political competition were not ripe. The current socio-political crisis seemed like a reoccurrence of disruptions of 1995. In fact, the same actors had surfaced, though they were playing different roles this time. The crisis was made worse by the problem of national identity. Allassane Ouattara's candidacy to the presidency and legislature was rejected on the basis of the fact that he was not Ivorian. Most of his followers were from the north — his region of origins. Since the 1995 crisis, social cohesion has been challenged and the 2000 general elections have worsened social divisions, adding issues of identity and of nationality to anyone whose name sound northern.

GERDDES-CI, now aware of this situation, facilitated the creation of *Forum des Confessions Religieuses* in 1997. In 1998, the *Forum des Partis Politiques* was created, thereby giving the country two platforms for consultation and reflection. In 1997, AID-CI started a training program in negotiation for CSOs and other political actors.

Faced with the scope of this crisis, the current president organized a "Forum for National Reconciliation" held October 9, 2001. The highest levels of CSOs were represented at this forum, but it is still not clear what role civil society is capable of playing since it is no longer credible as a neutral actor.

One lesson that can be drawn from the 1995 crisis is that political parties need to interact more often and they need to do so outside of electoral periods. If not, suspicions creep in and the political climate becomes unhealthy. A second lesson is that CSOs need to be very careful about their membership. By accepting some actors and individuals, particularly well-known politicians, their neutrality can be compromised, and they can be typed as partisan, thus reducing their potential effectiveness as an instrument of conflict prevention.

CI3. THE SOCIAL CONFLICT CREATED BY IMF'S STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM (1989)

The serious economic recession experienced by Côte d'Ivoire in the 1980s was characterized, as in developing countries, by measures aimed at strictly minimizing public expenses. The most common of such measures was the reduction of public servants' salaries. In Côte d'Ivoire, after much debate and hesitation, the president has decided to announce that public servants' salaries were going to be cut as part of this structural adjustment program (SAP). And yet, for the past few years, and mainly because of the collapse of raw materials, Ivorians' purchasing power had already significantly diminished. Over the past ten years, while inflation was rampant, salaries were blocked. The case of Côte d'Ivoire was particularly striking since, during the years of hardship, there had been a great deal instability in political leadership.

While all categories of workers were forced to accept the government's determination to apply the new measures, the *Syndicat National de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur* (SYNARES, the union of university professors and researchers) decided that they would not pay for the country's leaders' poor management and decided to stop this unfair measure. SYNARES engaged in rallying all the other independent unions to form the *Front du refus* (refusal front).

This SYNARES-initiated coalition of autonomous unions started an arm wrestling match with the government. The social climate quickly became insurrectional, and the government first took a hard line and then used intimidation before entering negotiations. SYNARES, on the other hand, made contradictory analyses and made proposals to dampen down the crisis. Street movements were organized, and the leaders of SYNARES were arrested and thrown into jail. The union was then dismantled and declared illegal. The struggle became clandestine but the "Front" held on. In the background, however, a mediation committee was formed to negotiate.

Just as the government agreed to entertain other alternatives to salary reductions, SYNARES decided to take on the root cause of the problem: it demanded democracy. From then on the *Front du refus* insisted that any solution to the crisis had to involve multiple political parties. The leadership increased repression and suspended the salaries of SYNARES members. The union then called on people's solidarity to come rescue those whose salaries had been stopped. Thanks to this solidarity, the union was able to open a store where union members could do their groceries at wholesale prices.

The pressure was so strong that the government had to resume the talks. No longer able to manage the crisis, the leadership of government agreed to SYNARES's demands in hopes that, in exchange, workers under the guidance of SYNARES would agree to the salary reductions required by the Bretton Woods institutions. It was at this juncture that the Ivorian politician, Allassane Dramane Ouattara was called upon to find a solution and get the country out of this situation. In the end, multiple parties were allowed, and Ouattara managed to avoid salary reductions.

SYNARES came out victorious from this crisis, which was a turning point in Côte d'Ivoire's modern history. The people admired it, and the leaders of government respected it as the only vital force deemed credible and legitimate in the country.

Once freedom of political expression was recovered, however, SYNARES failed to understand that it needed to withdraw from political games. In fact some of its leaders went on to create new political parties. A new union for university professors was created, and the leading role of SYNARES became more and more contested. Today, SYNARES is still conducting analyses, but its impact is quite reduced, given that the union is no longer widely accepted.

CI4. FARMERS AND HERDSMEN CONFLICTS: THE ROLE OF CHIEFS AND *DOZOS*

The northern region of Côte d'Ivoire is a grassland area bordering Burkina and Mali. Every year, during the dry season, conflicts between herdsmen and farmers are reported. Sometimes, these conflicts lead to the destruction of villages as well as deaths of people.

How the Conflict Started

The population of Côte d'Ivoire's savannah is made up essentially of farmers, whereas the populations of neighboring Mali and Burkina (at the borders) are mainly herdsmen. During the dry season, cattle herders travel across the border with their herds in search of more nutritious vegetation to fatten their animals, thereby increasing their chances of selling them on the Ivorian market. During this period, it is not uncommon to see cattle walk through agricultural fields, which causes resentment on the part of local people. Naturally, the owner of the field requests compensation for damages.

How the State Manages the Conflict

When conflicting parties reach an agreement, the farmer is usually compensated and the cattle herder continues on. However, sometimes these agreements are not possible, in which case the conflict is brought to the *sous-préfet*'s attention. In turn, the *sous-préfet* lets the *gendarmerie* (national police force) assess the damage and act as mediator. Unfortunately, the cattle herder often leaves for greener pastures and a less hostile environment before the proper process is complete. In such cases, the farmer has to swallow his losses. Understanding that they can in fact avoid compensation, herders have increasingly simply refused to come to terms themselves with the farmers whose fields their animals damage and the issue more often than not winds up with governmental officials who are slow to act. This situation has led locals to take justice in their own hands, leading to violence between these groups.

How Traditional Leaders Manage the Conflict

Faced with this situation, traditional chiefs have felt compelled to assert their legitimate role in managing this type of conflict. With help from AID-CI, they appealed to the local government that parties to the dispute go first to traditional authorities before they go the *sous- prefecture* where effective action is uncertain.

The chiefs also insisted that transhumance paths be maintained for herders to pass through without damage and that farmers be discouraged from planting near places where cattle can drink. They asked that community fences be built around villages so as to allow communities to keep the herds within their community boundaries. Finally, they requested that a traditional mediation process be established using chiefs as mediators and *dozos*, or traditional hunters, as monitors to watch the herds. Then, if and when negotiations failed between the parties involved, the case would be brought to the village chief, who would mediate according to wisdom and traditional values.

This approach has in fact been adopted in many areas in the north. Since that time, very few conflicts reached the level of the *gendarmerie.*

Mali Case Studies

M1. THE "SEUIL DE TALO" DAM PROJECT

The "Seuil de Talo" is a name given to the delta region near Bla, in the Ségou region of Mali that would be downriver from a proposed irrigation dam. Feasibility studies for the setup of that infrastructure have been carried out since 1987. An impact assessment was performed in 1995 and other complementary studies were done in 1997. The African Development Bank (AfDB) agreed to finance the project through the GOM.

For centuries, the main economic activities in the town of Djéné and its surrounding area have consisted of rice cultivation, fishing and animal breeding activities, including the seasonal migration of cattle. Therefore, the communities living 140 km down river from Djéné perceive the dam as a threat to their economic activities to the extent that it may reduce the water level. Despite the reluctance of local communities, the government approved the execution of the project. This produced a local conflict that has escalated to the national level.

It is important to note that the fishermen of Bozo were the first to raise local awareness about potential disadvantages of the Talo dam project. Indeed, they had noticed that their activities had been impeded by a reduction in the water level, a situation partly worsened by the usual droughts. In these fishermen's opinion, the dam, by depriving them and the farmers and cattle breeders alike, of their traditional activities, would harm the relationships between these three groups. The Bozo, the cattle breeders, the farmers, the stakeholders and people at the international level ended up rallying in an effort to increase awareness about the potential downsides of the project. Dialogues between this coalition and the government failed to lead to a consensus. The AfDB slowed down the payments for the implementation of the project while waiting to see more clearly how the situation would enfold. The project stalled.

At present, an "Association for the Survival of the Delta," which consists of all the associations working for the same cause, i.e., the sustainability of the region's economic activities, exists in Djéné. This association argues that:

- The project has been designed in a nonparticipatory manner, which goes against decentralization principles of the GOM.
- The impact assessment has neglected the same consequences. Only the narrow 30 km down river from the dam has been considered in the impact assessment.
- The profitability of the project has been overestimated.
- The project will negatively affect the activities of the communities downriver from it, which will give raise to many conflicts.
- Migration will speed up.

- The potential loss of its economic activities threatens Djéné's status as a site for human heritage (because of its important ancient mosque).
- A widespread consensus around the above concerns exists in Djéné.

The CSO: Its Role and Strategy in Resolving the Conflict

Many cooperatives and associations coexist in Djéné. Among them is a network promoting environmental education, the association of the pupils' parents, and the Djéné's heritage association. This forms what is called the "Association for the Survival of the Delta." created in June 2001. Its administrative status is still to be determined. This association aims to stretch down river as far as Mopti. In the course of this research, key personalities — the mayor and the deputy mayor of Djéné, the vice-president of the farmers' cooperative, and the coordinator of the Association for the Survival of the Delta were interviewed, as well as staff members of the international NGO, CARE. In the course of those interviews it became apparent that a number of Malian and international NGOS, including INAGEF, OMAES and CARE, had worked in the past with cooperatives and associations involved in the Delta Association. It was the association, however, that took on the main task of lobbying. These other CSOs provided support and training to make the Delta Association more effective in pressuring government.

In the course of its lobbying the Delta Association has been able to make the following points:

- There has been a lack of dialogue and communication between the government and the communities of Djéné. Given the government's commitment to decentralization this lack of awareness and information is serious.
- There has also been a lack of dialogue between the direct beneficiaries of the project, apart from one occasion when the issue of the project was debated at the National Assembly.
- Local communities were not sufficiently included in the planning phase of the project.
- Some technical aspects of the project may be flawed, especially the proceedings of its impact assessment.
- When dialogue between government and local people did occur it was often paternalist and ill viewed by local people, as when the Minister of Rural Development visited Djéné and urged local communities to change their production by cultivating sorrel to meet high demands from Sénégal, or to simply move out of the Bla delta and find new land to cultivate.
- The government, preoccupied by the development of the whole country in general, has its own ideas on how to develop the land.
- To local communities, the issue of the Talo dam is interlinked with other foreseeable conflicts: transhumance of animals from Mauritania and Burkina, and Bozo migrations to Côte d'Ivoire.

Currently this project is stalled. The GOM and AfDB plan to pursue it by arranging for still another technical mission. For this project to succeed without violence, however, it is probably going to be necessary to develop strategies and mechanisms embedded in the local culture: mediation, negotiation, flexible communication channels, local conventions, and use of traditional channels and to combine these with appropriate legislation concerning the status of resources that will be viewed as fair and that will be implemented in a fair manner by a competent legal authority.

M2. THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE NGO, AADEC IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT ON THE DISTRICT CHIEF'S SUCCESSION

Sébéniko is a famous district located in the fourth commune of the Bamako district. After its chief passed away, a conflict arose about who should succeed him. Both his elder son and an adviser wanted the position. In an attempt to set up a participatory general assembly for the identification of the development priorities for the district, AADeC expressed the wish to meet its chief, only to be told that there was none. The mayor's representative was a woman deemed too young to be able to resolve the conflict around the succession issue. AADeC then contacted the chief mayor of the fourth commune who asked this NGO to take control over the resolution of the succession conflict. The chief mayor offered his full support. AADeC contacted the two deputy representatives of the commune (along with the previously mentioned representative) who also guaranteed their support to the NGO in resolving the conflict.

This is how AADeC got to meet the son of the sick chief and his adviser separately to explain to them what activities the development of the district would be based on. Both parties agreed on the necessity for the general assembly to identify development priorities for the district; both parties participated in that assembly's organization.

The general assembly took place in an orderly manner, and the mayor participated. Opposite parties apologized to one another and jointly asked AADeC to continue its activities in the Sébéniko district. Since the AADeC program has taken place, all parties have fully participated in its execution. The mayor of the fourth commune of Bamako congratulated AADeC for its successful intervention in the resolution of the conflict.

AADeC's Role and Strategy

AADeC is an intermediary CSO that was created in September 1991. Its activities revolve around education, institutional development, organizational strengthening and training in illiteracy reduction.

AADeC does not actually specialize in conflict management or prevention. Unlike many CSOs that view peace within communities as a prerequisite for their involvement in the area, AADeC believes that conflicts are not necessarily a source of impediment for development. This is why AADeC, like in the case of Sébénikoro, often has to deal with conflict resolution.

The activities that AADeC undertook revolved around making people from the district aware of the necessity for organizing a general assembly, the aim of which would be to identify

development priorities. This is why it has privileged dialogues and mediation with each party separately at first, before organizing meetings involving both parties throughout the general assembly.

This NGO has been successful, probably because of its neutrality in the conflict and the emphasis it has put, during dialogue-based meetings, on development programs that are meaningful and important for the majority of the district's inhabitants. The support given by the latter is likely to have been a determinant in this NGO's success.

While it is not possible to say that AADeC has fully resolved the conflict on the succession of the district's chief, it has, however, improved the situation by helping conflicting actors cooperate and respect one another for the sake of the district's inhabitants.

M3. THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SYCOV[6] AND CMDT[7] — THE ROLE OF MALI'S FARMER COALITION (*Coordination National de la Plate Forme des Organisations Paysannes)*

Conflict Background

This conflict began in 2000 when the Minister of Rural Development visited Bougouni. During that visit, cotton farmers, through their union representatives, requested that (1) the price of cotton be set at 200 CFA francs per kilo, and (2) cotton producers' debts to CMDT be rescheduled through BNDA.

The minister rejected the requests. To put an end to cotton producers' insistence, the minister stated: "Agriculture is a business. If one does not prosper with it, one should give it up." Producers perceived that statement as a declaration of war, and many decided to stop all cotton cultivation until the government met their demands. Other producers, in Koutiala and other cotton-producing areas, soon followed the Bougouni cotton production boycott. Many producers blamed national headquarters of SYCOV (the cotton producers association) for the failure to create a dialogue with the Minister of Rural Development. A committee for conflict resolution was created which was given the mandate to negotiate two demands. The Chamber of Agriculture of Mali and the *Plateforme Paysanne* facilitated the negotiations with the government. The government finally approved the two requests: the price of cotton was set at 200 CFA francs per kilo, and the cotton growers' debt was rescheduled.

In the end, the conflict was resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. Another conflict has yet to be resolved, however, one pitting the national headquarter of SYCOV against the Committee for Conflict Resolution.

Role and Strategies of the National Coordination for the *Plateforme Paysanne*

The National Coordination for the Peasant Platform was created in December 1996 and consists of more than 100 cooperatives. A national coordination committee, consisting of 18 staff

[6] Syndicat des Producteurs de Coton et Culture Vivrières (Cotton and Food Crops producers' union)
[7] Compagnie Malienne des Textiles (Mali Textiles, Inc.)

members — nine men and nine women, directs this group. The objectives of the *Plateforme Paysanne* are:

1. to contribute to food security in Sahelian countries;
2. to safeguard adequate management of natural resources; and
3. to contribute to the implementation of sub-regional integration.

Its fields of intervention are:

1. the empowerment of member organizations through training and the creation of partnerships; and
2. the management of forests, tree nurseries and water.

The coordination for *Plateforme Paysanne* got involved in handling the CMDT-SYCOV conflict because of its membership in the Chamber of Agriculture of Mali. Its major contributions were the management of issues related to development projects through the professional relationships some of its members have with SYCOV.

Lessons Learned

The *Plateforme Paysanne* was successful in part because, while few of its staff had any formal training in conflict management and resolution, there were highly knowledgeable about the local culture and the ways that is handles conflict. Their resort to "traditional means" produced impressive results. These means included the evoking of relationships between members of a same age group, and kinship ties within and between ethnic groups.

M4. THE CROSS-BORDER TRAFFICKING OF THE SIKASSO (MALI) CHILDREN

Background

Confrontations between the Governments of Mali and Côte d'Ivoire have occurred for the past two years, regarding the trafficking[8] of Malian children, sent to plantations in Côte d'Ivoire as cheap labor. More conflicts have occurred between the two governments and the international civil society on the same issue. A protocol has been signed in September 2000 in which the two governments stipulated that all children illegally sent would be sent back home. They also recognized that this trafficking violates children's universal rights, and committed to fighting it by all means.

This conflict has been perceived as such only recently when the international media and civil society brought it to light. Far from being resolved, the conflict stands only at the stage of talks. In 1997, a Malian CSO, *Espace d'Interpellation Démocratique*, raised this issue and brought it to the attention of the GOM.

[8] The definition we give of the trafficking of children is the one of the NGO Mali en Jeu as:" the transfer of a child from a point A to a point B in the presence of an adult, in order to get a marketable value."

Studies conducted by three Malian CSOs (*Mali en Jeu*, *Aide à l'Enfance Canada* and ADAC), financed by international CSPs, made it possible to identify the main contributors to this problem of interstate trafficking of children. These are:

1. Malian plantation workers who settled in Côte d'Ivoire a long time ago;
2. Ivorian plantation workers;
3. the children's parents;
4. voluntary migration (from rural to urban areas);
5. teachers from Coranic schools;
6. truckers; and
7. intermediaries/facilitators.

In part this issue stems from a conflict of value systems — between traditional values embedded in rural communities and the values of the modern economy, typically seen as a modern value. Traditional Malian societies' perceptions of the value and role of a child clash with those of modern societies. Trafficking of children started a long time ago, though on a much smaller scale and did not catch the international community's attention. It went unnoticed by civil society until it had increased in scale in response to the demand of Ivorian plantations for labor.

Only when the international media, international NGOs and UNICEF identified this as a serious problem did national CSOs in these countries get concerned about it. At this point it became a conflict between the African states and the international community, and indirectly became an additional source of tension between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire over enforcement of the agreements. Now many institutions are involved in the management of this conflict. After signing the protocol with the Ivorian government, the Malian government is getting even more involved. The regional headquarters for the empowerment of women, children and the family of Sikasso is working hand in hand with the security force and the transport and border authorities (the police force, customs, and the territorial administration). This regional headquarter is also collaborating with NGOs such as *Mali en Jeu*, *Aide l'Enfance Canada,* and soon, ADAC.

Despite conditions that were agreed upon in the protocol, the Ivorian government has failed to send any children back to Mali. Authorities have carried out official missions to analyze the situation outside Côte d'Ivoire. Ivorian customs officials are becoming stricter and are stopping Malian and Ivorian children with Jola names from coming into the country. This stricter stance reflects anxiety on the part of the Ivorian authorities who, faced with the inability to conceal the phenomenon, are trying to lessen the scope the problem.

Roles and Strategies of the CSO in the Resolution of the Conflict

Mali en Jeu and *Aide à l'Enfance Canada* (AEC) are the two CSOs combating the trafficking of Malian children to Côte d'Ivoire. The Association for the Development and the assistance to Communities (ADAC) is on the verge of joining them, as soon as it finalizes its plan. All these

institutions are national NGOs of an intermediate type, whose field of action is not conflict resolution. The activities of AEC in Sikasso and *Mali en Jeu,* however*,* are directly linked to the children trafficking issue; both institutions' objective is, amongst others, to welcome and bring the trafficked children back to their communities. ADAC, on the other hand, is a national NGO in charge of improving the livelihoods of communities. In Sikasso, its areas of intervention are Kadiolo and Kolondièba where its priority is sustainable agriculture.

These CSOs have been involved in these issues through the funding they received from international CSOs like Bread for the World and *Terre des Hommes*. These donors financed research to be carried out by the national CSOs to evaluate the truthfulness of the trafficking problem. Different programs were launched once the results came out. For the moment, the CSO *Mali en Jeu* and AEC have focused on finding, welcoming and returning children to their families. Only ADAC is working on the core problem by targeting the promoters of the traffic and raising public consciousness about this issue. ADAC is talking about forming a CSO network to deal with this issue more effectively.

M5. CROSS-BORDER TRADE AND THE REGIONAL UNION OF FARMERS', CATTLE MERCHANTS', MEAT MERCHANTS', AND LEATHER AND SKIN MERCHANTS' COOPERATIVES OF SIKASSO

The regional union is a federation of farmers', cattle merchants', meat sellers', skin and milk merchants' cooperatives in the Sikasso region. It can be defined as an organization of the civil society of an intermediary type. The objectives of this organization are to solve a few internal problems whose scope and consequences go beyond borders. These problems are of two sorts. The first one concerns access to the water and pastureland of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso for migratory cattle from Mali. The second problem relates to the unlawful taxes imposed on cattle merchants within the country as well as over the borders.

Ivorian and Burkinabé local communities unilaterally establish access rules to their pastures and water, as well as the payment of a tax by Malian farmers. This discrimination is contested by the regional union, which argues that the ownership of a certificate allowing the seasonal migration of cattle, given by the Malian Ministry in charge of animal rearing, should protect them from that type of abuse in all ECOWAS countries.

The type of harassment that truckers and borders authorities (the police force, customs officials and others) put on cattle merchants threatens their economic viability. Such harassment constitutes a violation of legislative and regulatory policies. This conflict, which opposes Malian cattle breeders to their own government, has two main causes: the appalling behavior of the transport authorities, as well as the government's inefficiency in getting neighboring states to apply the decisions made by ECOWAS. All these issues considerably impede the exportation of Malian cattle to neighboring countries.

Roles and Strategies of CSOs in the Resolution of the Conflict

In order to solve the conflict, the regional union has focused on two main elements. The first one consists of increasing information and raising the producers' awareness on policies and laws

regarding the movement of animals. These policies and laws are translated into the dominant local language of this region, Bamanan, to make them more user-friendly. The second focus has been put on the creation of markets at the borders, the first of which will be in Sikasso. This market (financed by CILSS) will be managed by a private firm. Once the market is opened, Ivorian consumers will be free to come and buy at Sikasso. This way, Malian merchants no longer will need to drive their cattle to Abidjan and pay illegal charges.

It is possible to say whether this strategy of the border market will solve the problem. It may only shift the pressure from Malian producers to Ivorian buyers.

M6. THE SCHOOL CRISIS IN MALI: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Since the creation of the Third Republic, the school system has functioned only intermittently. The government has provided inadequate solutions to pupils' and teachers' protests. The new leaders of the Third Republic have put an emphasis on education and health as priority sectors for the economic and social development of the country. This effort has resulted in increased spending for the two sectors and in the elaboration of some ten-year programs for better management of the two sectors' development. Despite these efforts, the Malian school system is hampered by the behavior of both pupils and teachers. The situation of the schools has led to sharp conflict between student organizations and teachers' organizations and the Malian state. This conflict has led to destruction of property and to physical violence. In order to help for the resolution of this conflict, civil society has decided to get involved.

The CSO, Its Role and Strategy in Resolving the Conflict

Civil society, through CAFO (The Coordinating Committee of Women's NGOs) and AMDH (Malian association for individuals' universal rights) got involved in this conflict. The basic strategy used is mediation through conciliation committees.

AMDH has mediated with the National Federation of Teachers (FEN). The conciliation committee it created met 12 times in 2000. It consists of AMDH, FEN, and representatives of the Ministry of Education. The discussions were lead by AMDH at its head office (for neutrality purposes). At the end of the negotiations, the different parties signed a mediation statement. AMDH served as the party accountable for this statement. This agreement related to the status and wages of teachers. For the monitoring of the agreement, a permanent conciliation executive was designated.

CAFO also got involved in the school crisis. It organized about 30 meetings with the students, with women's organizations in districts, with the government, with the heads of districts, with donors such as USAID, with the unions, and with communal authorities. Its strategy was to set targets to bring at least a certain number of students back to school. CAFO used its network of women to lobby getting politics out of the crisis management and to explain to the Malian public what the costs of this crisis were. It had some success in these efforts.

The school crisis in Mali, however, is far from over. There have been subsequent student strikes in reaction to the announcement of new criteria for the allocation of scholarships. The

government passed laws related to those new criteria in order to deal with the increased number of students and to focus more on the quality of teaching. The students rejected these criteria. A national debate on the school crisis was set to take place in August 2001. All stakeholders in education participated.

Annex 5 Anecdotes/Best Practices for Mali and Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire Anecdotes

CIAN1. STRIKING STUDENTS

During the serious university and school crisis of 1999, striking students did not contend themselves with chasing students out of their classrooms. They went as far as to burn buildings and to act violently against non-strikers. The traditional police force was overwhelmed and powerless. In Korhogo, *Dozo* hunters decided to guard the schools night and day. In this area, no schools were burned, as aggressors were discouraged by the presence of *dozos*; it is likely that they were also impressed and deterred by the mystical powers that these traditional hunters are believed to possess.

CIAN2 CATTLE THIEF AND ETHNIC CONFLICT

The people of northern Côte d'Ivoire are cattle breeders, though most of them are farmers. When they do breed cattle, they call upon the services of a Peul herdsman whose specialty is pastoralism. Peul people are originally from Mali and Burkina Faso. Through this system, they become "salaried men" whose salaries consist of cows' milk and a few bank notes.

Villagers, in order to pay their "salaried" employee, gather together to leave their herds in the care of the herdsman. As a sign of solidarity, but also for controlling purposes, herds under the responsibility of a single herdsman are kept in one corral. It so happens, however, that some of these herdsmen are dishonest.

In the village of Kasséré, the villagers who had given their cattle to a herdsman to care for began to notice that their herds, instead of increasing, were actually decreasing. One morning, they went to see their herdsman to count the animals with him. Surprised by this unexpected "audit," the herdsman nonetheless complied. But, as they came near the park, the herdsman asked to go and get an animal that had gotten lost the day before. He left to find this lost animal till dark. Back to the village, the owners could not find the herdsman at his house where his wife and child were waiting for him. As he did not show up for several days, the herdsman's wife concluded that the farmers had murdered her husband. The news got out and spread through the *canton* (district), which almost fueled a conflict between farmers and cattle breeders: while the herdsmen wanted to seek revenge for their "brother," the villagers wanted to get their cows back from any Peul. The village chief and his entourage attempted to calm things down by making the accused swear on the *fétiche* (sacred object). Herdsmen put their weapons down and, after a week, took the case to the *gendarmerie*. In spite of the village chief's intervention, the farmers were found guilty.

The "widow" was given to another Peul to marry. This herdsman had settled in the village, claiming to be a relative of the murdered Peul. During the time the accused were in jail, the *gendarmerie* decided to have the Peul who married the "widow" take care of the herds, in spite of village authorities' opposition because the latter were not fooled.

Some five years later, the "dead" man was spotted at a market, some two hundred kilometers away from Kasséré, calmly minding his own business. The closest *gendarmerie* office was

immediately notified, and the dishonest herdsman was called and then handed over to the administrative *circonscription* where his former employers were rotting in jail.

Explanatory Note:

This anecdote shows how a conflict that started between individuals escalated to the community level. It went from being local to presenting the risk of going across borders. It also shows that traditional chiefs constitute a first level of conflict management and resolution that is based on cultural values.

CIAN3. INSECURITY, THE DEATH PENALTY AND AMNESTY-CI

Social insecurity had reached unacceptable levels in 1998: the police force was authorized to kill bandits to prove their determination. Some bandits were killed, but so were non-bandits. As this method did not seem to yield satisfactory results, the Parliament started working on legislation in favor on capital punishment. Amnesty International-Côte d'Ivoire protested and published documents to condemn the death penalty as a solution to insecurity. During the preparatory phase of drafting the new constitution, AI, which may not directly intervene by virtue of its statute, lobbied various civil society organizations to ensure that fundamental laws would forbid capital punishment.

Mali Anecdotes

MAN1. THE KOMBO VILLAGE'S *"TON"*

The village *ton* of Kombo is the product of the village population's collective work. A management committee of 10 members, whose mandate's length is unlimited, manages the *ton*. A few members have noticed a lack of transparency and lack of changeover of power as well as bad management. A group of these members have put pressure to obtain changes. This pressure group is in conflict with the leaders of the *ton*. The village split into two sides. In order to avoid the split, the village chief called on INAGEF to assist in the management of the conflict. INAGEF provided assistance in training, support and advice to the village. In the end, the village elaborated a convention on the management of the *ton*'s resources. It also created an internal regulation within the village *ton* and achieved a reconciliation between the two parties.

MAN2. PUPILS AS LABOR

It has been noticed in a few communes that the croplands owned by the school were very productive. Pupils were working in the fields most of the time. The schoolmasters gained considerable benefits by selling the harvests. Appalled parents called on the teachers to explain the situation. The teachers reassured these illiterate parents by saying that the law allowed such activities.

Some skeptical parents took the initiative to confront the school inspector (upon INAGEF's advice) on the matter. Despite his skepticism, the inspector requested that an investigation be carried out. The investigation proved the parents right, and schoolmasters were called in for an explanation. The latter agreed to stop the exploitation of the pupils. It is important to state that in

the 1960s, pupils who are now parents have been subjected to the same type of exploitation; indeed, in 1965, a "ruralizing" reform was introduced in the Malian schooling system whose aim was to supposedly initiate the children to agricultural activities. The reform was abandoned a long time ago (INAGEF).

MAN3. WOMEN SAND SELLERS AND MEDIATION IN SCHOOL CONFLICTS

Within the school crisis context, CAFO called on women selling sand in the conflict management process. These illiterate women initially drew the public's curiosity. It was thought that conflict resolution was not the business of sand sellers, much less women. But these women showed so much determination in their mission that all actors congratulated them.

MAN4. WOMEN AND WAR

The national women's movement for the safeguarding of national peace and unity (MNFSPUN) struggled for its implantation. From the moment the conflict in north Mali arose, the MNFSPUN women mobilized to contribute to the management of the conflict. In the government and the military force's opinion, women are meant to stay at home. For the northern fighters, the aim was to put these women on the sidelines and avoid any kind of confrontation with them. At the end of the conflict, MNFSPUN was given a medal for its considerable contribution to peace.